





# THE NEW WORLD OF TO-DAY









# THE NEW WORLD OF TO-DAY

*By*

A. R. HOPE MONCRIEFF

With Economic Data supplied by

LIONEL W. LYDE, M.A.

*Professor of Economic Geography, University College, London*

& IRENE J. CURNOW, B.A.

*Assistant in the School of Geography in University College, London*

and

A Series of MAPS, to date, by

JOHN BARTHOLOMEW & SON Ltd.

*The Edinburgh Geographical Institute*

VOLUME VI

VISVA—BHARATI

161037

LIBRARY.

THE GRESHAM PUBLISHING COMPANY LTD.

66 Chandos Street, Covent Garden, London

1922



# CONTENTS

## VOLUME VI

	Page
ASIA - - - - -	I
INTRODUCTION - - - - -	I
SIBERIA AND ITS PEOPLE - - - - -	3
THE EASTERN PROVINCES - - - - -	13
CENTRAL SIBERIA - - - - -	16
WESTERN SIBERIA - - - - -	19
RUSSIAN CENTRAL ASIA - - - - -	21
TRANSCASPIA - - - - -	26
THE KHANATES - - - - -	29
RUSSIAN TURKESTAN - - - - -	32
THE PAMIRS - - - - -	37
TRANSCAUCASIA - - - - -	39
ASIA MINOR AND ITS BORDERLANDS - - - - -	47
TURKEY IN ASIA - - - - -	47
ANATOLIA - - - - -	54
ARMENIA AND KURDISTAN - - - - -	68
SYRIA AND PALESTINE - - - - -	82
MESOPOTAMIA - - - - -	104
ARABIA - - - - -	115
THE PEOPLE - - - - -	115
THE COUNTRY - - - - -	121



## Contents

	Page
PERSIA - - - - -	137
IRAN AND ITS PEOPLE - - - - -	137
PERSIAN PROVINCES AND CITIES - - - - -	152
AFGHANISTAN AND BALUCHISTAN - - - - -	165
AFGHANISTAN - - - - -	165
BALUCHISTAN - - - - -	174
THE BRITISH INDIAN EMPIRE - - - - -	177
HINDOSTAN - - - - -	177
INHABITANTS OF INDIA - - - - -	187
POLITICAL DIVISIONS - - - - -	203
ADMINISTRATION - - - - -	210
INDIAN CITIES - - - - -	219
ANIMAL LIFE - - - - -	236
PRODUCTIONS AND NATURAL RESOURCES - - - - -	245
COMMERCIAL AND STATISTICAL SURVEY—	
ASIA - - - - -	251
“RUSSIAN” LANDS IN ASIA - - - - -	254
SIBERIA - - - - -	255
RUSSIAN CENTRAL ASIA - - - - -	256
TRANSCAUCASIA - - - - -	257
GEORGIA - - - - -	257
AZERBAIJAN - - - - -	258
ARMENIA - - - - -	259
TURKEY IN ASIA - - - - -	259
CYPRUS - - - - -	262
SYRIA - - - - -	263
PALESTINE - - - - -	264
ARABIA - - - - -	266
MESOPOTAMIA - - - - -	267
PERSIA - - - - -	268
AFGHANISTAN - - - - -	270
BALUCHISTAN - - - - -	270
INDIA - - - - -	271

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
A Street Scene in Bengal ( <i>In Colour</i> ) - - - - -	<i>Frontispiece</i>
"The Cup that Cheers": a tea-seller in the streets of Babylon - - - - -	2
"Some Smile!" a Siberian (Yakut) woman in her winter furs - - - - -	5
Life in a Siberian Town: returning from church, Tomsk - - - - -	7
On the Trans-Siberian Railway: a wayside station - - - - -	9
Siberia: a summer tent on the tundra - - - - -	11
In the Transbaikai Province: a tent of Buriat nomads - - - - -	15
The Siberian "White City"—Irkutsk, at the junction of the Irkut and Angara Rivers - - - - -	17
Vladivostock Harbour - - - - -	20
Nomad Kirghiz Women outside their Movable Homes - - - - -	23
Merv: a school in the <i>aul</i> (oasis village) - - - - -	27
On the Central Asian Desert - - - - -	29
Bokhara: fruit stalls beside the ancient palace of the Emir - - - - -	31
The Tomb of Timour, Samarkand - - - - -	33
Roofed in from the Sun: a bazaar in Old Tashkend - - - - -	35
A Proud Trophy for the Sportsman: an <i>Ovis poli</i> shot in the Asian Highlands - - - - -	38
A Georgian Peasant - - - - -	40
♣ General View of Tiflis, the capital of Georgia - - - - -	41
Baku: the approach to the main quay - - - - -	43
Great Ararat and Little Ararat - - - - -	45
A Bridge on the Military Road, near Kars - - - - -	46
The Unchanging East: primitive farming in Asia Minor - - - - -	49
Turkish Peasants, in the neighbourhood of Brusa - - - - -	51
Trebizond: a view of the town and harbour from above the Demendera Road - - - - -	55
Brusa: a general view showing Mount Olympus - - - - -	59
One of the Great Ports of the World: the harbour front, Smyrna - - - - -	61
Pergamos: the ruined gateway of a Roman theatre - - - - -	63
Cyprus: the modern town and port of Baffo (New Paphos) - - - - -	67
A Typical Armenian Village - - - - -	71
Erzeroum: a winter panorama from the Citadel - - - - -	73
The Old Capital of Kurdistan: a view of Bitlis, showing the fortress ruins - - - - -	75
Armenian Girls weaving Carpets on Hand-looms, Van - - - - -	79

## List of Illustrations

	Page
The Silk Industry of Northern Syria: sorting the different qualities of cocoons - -	83
Damascus: the " Street which is called Straight " - - - - -	85
Baalbek: the largest building block in the world - - - - -	87
Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee - - - - -	90
A Harvesting Scene in Samaria - - - - -	93
Jerusalem: shepherd and sheep at the Damascus Gate - - - - -	95
The Mosque of Omar, Jerusalem - - - - -	98
A Wilderness Outpost of Christendom: the famous Monastery of Mar Saba - -	101
Weeping for Departed Glories: Friday afternoon at the Jews' Wailing Place, Jerusalem	103
Mesopotamia: a typical raft, or <i>kellek</i> , on the Tigris - - - - -	105
Making Sun-dried Bricks, near Nineveh, Mesopotamia - - - - -	107
Transport in Babylonia: all his belongings (including two wives!) on a donkey's back -	109
Baghdad: the famous Bridge of Boats - - - - -	111
Date Harvesting, Mesopotamia - - - - -	113
Bedouin Women Churning - - - - -	117
A Typical Bedouin - - - - -	119
An Arab Dhow in the Red Sea - - - - -	123
An Outpost of Empire: street scene, Aden - - - - -	126
The Holy Place of Islam: the Kaaba, Mecca - - - - -	129
The Wonderful Ruined City of Petra: the temple of Ed Deir, carved entirely out of the living rock - - - - -	133
Sinai: the Monastery of St. Catherine at the foot of the Holy Mountain - - -	134
Stairway up the Steep Side of Mount Sinai, used for Centuries by Pilgrims - -	135
Persian Woman Spinning - - - - -	140
Persian <i>Seyid</i> , with Water Pipe ( <i>Kalian</i> ) - - - - -	142
Persia's Quaint Instrument of Justice: an offender trussed up for punishment by bastinado - - - - -	146
Persian Woman: indoor costume - - - - -	148
Persian Women in Outdoor Costume - - - - -	149
The Ruined Archway of the Blue Mosque, Tabriz - - - - -	153
Mud Walls and Flat Roofs: a scene in Persia's capital, Teheran - - - - -	154
Ispahan: the <i>Maidan</i> (on the right) and the famous Masjid-i-Shah, or Royal Mosque (with dome) - - - - -	157
A Relic of Persia's Ancient Grandeur: ruins of the Palace of Xerxes, Persepolis -	159
One of Persia's most sacred Places: the tomb of the Imam Reeza, Meshed - -	161
Courtyard of a Persian Caravanserai - - - - -	164
The famous Khyber Pass: a native caravan passing Ali Musjid Fort - - - -	167
A Village in North Afghanistan - - - - -	169
Kabul: Tomb of Baber, grandson of Tamerlane - - - - -	171
Kelat: where the citadel of the Khan dominates the town - - - - -	175
The Khojak Tunnel, near Quetta - - - - -	176
Bathing in the Sacred River Ganges - - - - -	179
State Barges of H.H. the Maharajah on the Jhelum River at Srinagar, Cashmere -	181

## List of Illustrations

	Page
The Mighty Himalayas: Mount Kinchinjunga from the north	183
Parsees Worshipping the New Moon on the Beach at Bombay	188
Players by the Wayside	190
A Hindu Bride and Bridegroom	192
In the Land where the Monkey is revered: a <i>Bandar-wallah</i>	193
Interior of Jain Temple on Mount Aboo, Rajputana	195
Nautch-girls of Old Delhi	199
A Typical Fakir, Benares	200
The Most Lovely Work of Human Hands: the Taj Mahal, Agra	205
Amritsar: the "Golden Temple" and "Lake of Eternal Life"	207
Madura: the principal Gopura of the great Temple	209
An Indian Ekka	213
A General View of Simla, among the Himalayas, the summer head-quarters of the Indian Government	217
On the Hoogly River at Calcutta: liners and Ganges boats	221
Bombay: a view in the native quarter	223
Catamaran, Madras Coast	224
Delhi: the steps of the Jama Masjid or Great Mosque	226
Benares, the Metropolis of Hinduism: temples near the Burning Ghat	229
Lucknow: ruins of the Residency, showing Banqueting Hall, Tower, and Flagstaff	231
Jeypore, "the Paris of India": a typical business street (Jahari Bazaar)	233
Tanjore: the Sacred Bull, made of black granite (weight 80 tons)	235
"My Lord the Elephant" in the service of Man	239
Crocodiles in a "Tank", near Karachi	243
Indian Tailors at Work (Lucknow)	245
An Indian Open-air Laundry, Darjeeling	247
A Hindu Brass-worker (Benares)	249

# MAPS IN COLOUR

---

	Page
ASIA	I
TURKEY, PERSIA, AND ARABIA	48
INDIA	168
INDIA—OROGRAPHICAL	176

# ASIA

## INTRODUCTION

Asia, which has been taken to be the cradle of the World's peoples, the focus of its earliest culture as of its highest religions, makes the largest and most populous of its divisions. This continent measures over 17,000,000 square miles, to which might be added Europe as merely a peninsular projection of its bulk, separated as they are for the most part by but slight natural boundaries. It contains at least half of mankind, some 800,000,000 or more, here thinly scattered, there thickly pressed together, according to the conditions of soil and climate. These populations belong to different families, from races akin to our own ancestry to stunted aborigines of dubious origin. Even as to the chief races their origin and breeding-ground is not always clear; but in historical times the swarthy Semites have been prominent on one side, as the yellow-skinned Mongols on the other and over the central plains.

For classical days and for our own dark ages, Asia's ancient renown loomed out against a background of Cimmerian mists, when this name covered at first no more than the corner we know as Asia Minor; then it was expanded into a dimmer Asia Major, taking in Scythia, the Caucasus region, Persia, Arabia, and India. We have no certainty as to the origin of the name, since such legendary imagination as once passed for historical lore licensed itself in the invention of eponymous personages to account for adopted place-names. In this case the mythical godmother was Asia, daughter of Oceanus, mother of Atlas, a

genealogy like the naming of Europe from the Syrian maiden landed by Zeus in Crete, where recent discoveries have dignified this fable as a possible adumbration of actual history.

It seems clear that the savagery of Europe was leavened by colonization from the swarming coasts or desiccating steppes of Asia, if not still earlier from the rich Nile valley. But while for four score generations or so the smaller division of our world has been advancing, the larger has been going back in progress. Asia's peoples, debilitated by climate, superstition, and slavery, have fallen behind the Western nations. Only a branch of the Mongol family has on the far-eastern side awakened recently to a new consciousness of strength and ability that from the Continent's most remote corner sometimes seems to threaten the pride and power of the white man.

While the achievements and ambition of Japan have stirred all Asia, on the west side it is now involved in the commotions of Europe. Here also the far-spreading earthquake of our Great War has wiped out boundaries, shaken down decrepit Governments, and shattered the framework of old societies. Tartars and Arabs, Georgians and Syrians, meek Hindus and mongrel Siberians, are affected by new names of freedom and reports of institutions exotic on their soil. The break-up of the Russian and the Turkish empires has let loose several of their dependencies to drift, without helm or compass, upon whirling waves of political excitement. Some of

## The World of To-day

them have snatched or demanded a liberty which they might find hard to maintain against disciplined aggression, harder perhaps to defend from the ignorance, turbulence, and inveterate feuds of their unripe citizens.

A writer dealing with the present condition of the Nearer East has in this volume to plead such an excuse for imperfections as was needed in the border countries of Europe. In the sudden confusion spread to adjacent quarters of Asia, an account of them must refer mainly to their condition a few years back, with but slight outlining of recent movements as to which we are not yet always fully informed. Where trade

and peaceful travel are for the moment paralysed, and the ground may still be overhung by the reek of battles and massacres, the reader cannot expect a clear picture of revolutions spawning mushroom republics and would-be kingdoms, like to prove as unstable as a spilling of quicksilver or of a mixture of hostile elements. But the great features of Nature remain undisturbed by the restlessness of man; and these are to be dwelt on with more confidence than in describing the "human geography" of what, when sudden upheaval shakes slow decay into ruin, seems too rashly qualified as the "Unchangeable East".



Underwood & Underwood

"The Cup that Cheers": a tea seller in the streets of Babylon

Tea is perhaps the most widely distributed of Asia's products, and the Russian samovar shown in the picture is one of the oldest forms of cooking utensil. The beverage is being served in glasses, without milk or sugar.

## SIBERIA AND ITS PEOPLE

Siberia is made up of the basins of the great rivers flowing northward from the Central Asian heights, rivers not so famous as the Ganges or the Indus, but surpassing them in volume of water poured down to be turned into ice. The principal streams, opening into the Arctic Ocean by deep gulfs, are the Obi or Ob, the Jenisei, and the Lena, each with a course of 2000 to 3000 miles. To the Pacific flows the Amur, also nearly 3000 miles long, the left bank and the mouth of which belong to Siberia. The eastern side is broken by mountains, for the most part of no great height; the central division presents rather that monotonous flatness which we take as characteristic of Siberia; towards the Pacific again roughened by mountain ranges. In general the land slopes from south to north. On the south are the mountains, steppes, and sandy deserts, by which Russian territory marches with the Chinese empire. Through the centre runs a belt of fertile black soil, 300 to 400 miles wide, naturally given up to long grass and birch woods, but capable of growing rich crops. Beyond this the land is covered by *taiga*, a dense jungle, chiefly of coniferous trees strangling each other in the struggle to escape from their own gloomy shade, felled into impenetrable tangles by storms, to rot in the damp darkness below or at the edge of morasses scummed by decaying vegetation; then pines and larches dwarf to bushes and mosses, and the Arctic shores have a wide border of *tundra*, deserts withered not by the sun, but by the eternal ice into which they merge. The characteristic *tundra* is

a frozen marsh, relieved by heights of rock and glacier, half-melted by the hot sun into eager streams and stagnant pools. A few feet below the thawed surface the soil remains frost-bound even in summer, when the grey waste takes on a pale tinge of mossy green with bright spots surprising the eye here and there, and becomes alive with birds, but to man is almost uninhabitable through swarms of mosquitoes hanging about him like smoke, till he longs for relief in autumn frosts heralding the long dark winter. Not snow and ice so much as the mosquitoes, that plague all Siberia, are the true terror of the tundra, says the naturalist Brehm, who tells us how this naked watery ground has its moments of glory reflected from above. "When a thunderstorm threatens after a hot day the sky darkens here and there to the deepest grey-blue, the vapour-laden clouds sink beneath the lighter ones, and the sun shines through, clear and brilliant; then the dreary monotonous landscape is magically beautified. For light and shade now diversify the hill-tops and valleys, and the wearisome monotony of their colour gains variety and life. And when, in the middle of a midsummer night, the sun stands large and blood-red in the heavens, when all the clouds are flushed with purple from beneath, when those hill-tops which hide the luminary bear a far-reaching flaming crown of rays, when a delicate rosy haze lies over the brown-green landscape—when, in a word, the indescribable magic of the midnight sun casts its spell over the soul; then this wilderness is transformed into enchanted fields, and a blissful awe



trious emigrants, the natural overflow of a poor and prolific population, for whom it became what America is for the west side of Europe. Voluntary emigration, encouraged and regulated by the Government, went on apace, at a rate accelerated with the opening of communications, every settler getting a farm measured in square miles, free from taxes for three years. Of late, some quarter of a million new inhabitants have been added yearly; and the whole population of Siberia is estimated at over ten millions. One of the most active and thriving constituents was thousands of German settlers, their natural prosperity looked on askance by less thrifty neighbours. A good many Polish patriots have been exiled here; the ubiquitous Jew trader of eastern Europe has not failed to find his way over the Urals; and in recent times there has been an influx of cheap and enduring Chinese labour.

This fast-growing nation has its shortcomings. For the most part ignorant and superstitious, with little chance of culture, condemned by the climate to long spells of sleepy idleness, scattered among half-heathen natives with whom they assimilate but too readily, the Siberian Russians make a boorish and loutish folk, given to drunkenness, gambling, lying, and laziness, contented with black bread and cabbage soup if they can season it with the brandy and beer of the country. Their strong point is a physical vigour that should help them to grow out of the semi-barbarism imposed by these circumstances. A high birth-rate is checked by a high death-rate, weeding out members unfit for survival in such trying conditions of climate, with little help from medical resources. The spirit that set a man upon emigrating from the familiar routine of home is itself a promise of strength. As for the demoralizing convict element, that seems not in too large proportion to be wholesomely absorbed. The offences punished by exile were often only a form of misdirected energy. The experience of Australia went to show how even vulgar crime may be deodorized by contact with the open-air honesty that should be

developed by thriving circumstances; and here the sympathy of the ordinary peasant for "unfortunates" is excusable as connected with the fact that many of the exiles of Siberia have all along been political prisoners whose offence, as often as not, would be a higher measure of intelligence or indignant hatred of oppression, that marked them out among their more submissive fellows. As an antidote to the really criminal element there are communities of banished Russian dissenters, whose moral character seems often in direct ratio to their want of orthodoxy; while, on the other hand, native offenders from Turkestan are not a desirable addition to the Siberian population. In all, the victims of Russian law were said to be less than 4 per cent of the whole emigration; and this proportion went on decreasing as Russia recognized the advantage of filling its great Asian dependency with sturdy labour, unstained by crime. The location of convicts came to be limited to certain mining districts, out of the way of agricultural progress.

As yet most of the towns are little more than villages of log huts, sometimes straggling for a mile or two along the high road. Among these humble homes, best furnished with smoke and dirt, stand out a few more solid dwellings, the residences of officials or traders, and the Greek church with its green or blue cupolas and other tawdry splendours. More prosperous places, but for public buildings and the residences of rich folk, seem a greater aggregation of the same wooden houses; and in all Siberia there are not as yet a dozen cities as large as some of our county towns. Some of the provincial capitals, however, show a sense of what is due to their dignity in solid architecture for institutions attesting how the country has been regulated and administered by Europeans, who would not let the sons of the soil lose their civilized birthright. The better sort are praised for a hearty and frank, if sometimes rather too pressing, hospitality to strangers, who, indeed, must often come as a godsend into the monotony of Siberian society.

Unfortunately, the ill-paid official class

was accused of the corruption that too much infects all Eastern Governments; and while the Siberian, like other colonists, has developed a sense of independence unknown in Russia, his mind is paralysed by something of Oriental fatalism, which lets him submit to oppression as inevitable, taking refuge from his troubles in drunkenness or venting his wrongs in stealthy crime. Protests against unpopular orders, it is said, sometimes take the form of incendiary fires, where wholesome public spirit finds little material to work upon; and the improvident peasant is only less slow than the nomad native in accepting forest laws to check their wasteful consumption of timber. Till recently Siberia was practically under police government, a tyranny tempered by dishonesty. A few years ago came into operation a new judicial system, from which great things were hoped. But the Siberian has been used to obey authority rather than

law; and the law must be a very flexible instrument to suit his special circumstances, distance from centres of government alone making difficult his relations with judicature. The incoherent rawness of this sprawling young nation was manifested by the confusion of factions into which it quickly fell after the Russian revolution.

Next to good administration such a country urgently needs means of communication. In our own time it has been shown that the northern mouths of the rivers are open to navigation, but only during a short summer season. The main artery of travel used to be the caravan road to Kiakhta, on the Chinese frontier, by which even in the depth of winter travellers could cross the continent by a rough but cheap posting system, a month's journey, under favourable circumstances, from Moscow to Peking, while tea took a year or so on its way from the market of Hankow to the great fair at



Life in a Siberian Town: returning from church, Tomsk

## The World of To-day

Nijni-Novgorod. Beyond Irkutsk this road gives off two branches, one keeping straight forward to the Amur, that in summer is navigated by steamer to the Pacific coast; the other turning north towards Kamtchatka, on which after a time horseback is exchanged for an uneasy seat on a reindeer, or the journey ends in sledges drawn by dogs. On the frequented roads, where milestones mark how many thousand versts one is from Petrograd, and if not telegraph poles, branches of trees or mounds surmounted by crosses line out the way through deep winter snows, there are rough post-stations at fixed points, in which the traveller may rest, if he can for noise, smoke, and stench, till his turn comes to be carried out by sturdy half-broken horses driven wildly through thick and thin, often, when the jehu happens to be drunk or the "fare" open-handed, in a manner that gives a spice of adventure to such a journey. The *tarantass* of Russian travel has been often described, a light wagon on springless wooden wheels, at the bottom of which the occupant finds what ease he can in curling up among the softest part of his baggage. In winter sledges are more easily drawn over the hard-frozen snow.

The military exigencies of Russia inspired its Government to push on the making of the Trans-Siberian Railway, that by a line of more than 6000 miles should link Petersburg to the Pacific. Originally a single rail, it has been doubled through the whole or the greater part of the route. The goal first proposed was Vladivostock, near the southern end of the Russian Pacific coastline, and the route was put into construction from this point as well as from Europe. But the plan was modified in a way that came to be remodelled by Japanese victories. Having acquired an ice-free harbour on the Gulf of Pechili, Russia took further advantage of China's difficulties to extort its consent for bringing the railway through Manchuria. The Vladivostock route was to become a mere branch, the main line, after passing through the south of Siberia, beyond Lake Baikal, being deflected into Chinese territory to find its terminus at Port Arthur.

Completed at the end of 1901, this enterprise, enabling Russia to bring her military strength to bear on the Pacific, proved also of the highest importance for the prosperity of Siberia by thawing the frost-bound conditions of its industry, as shown by the rapid growth of old and new towns along the line. The war of 1904 put its Manchurian end into Japanese hands; but its main trunk, stretched through the most fertile zone of Northern Asia, makes an artery for traffic fed by the waterways with which the country is veined, as by branches thrown out to promising districts of the steppes. Sanguine projectors have already been planning further lines over frozen wildernesses, and there is even a scheme in the air for tunnelling under Behring Strait; but it seems likely that Russia may have to drop expensive railway-making for a time.

What manufactures have been introduced into Siberia will naturally be carried on in the towns, which supply cloth, linen, soap, glass, paper, and other wares for the needs of the people, while richer fabrics and most luxuries must still be imported from Europe. Tanning makes a considerable trade where both skins and bark are abundant. A kind of nettle supplies a fibre which, like hemp, is turned to account for weaving into coarse cloth. One of the most flourishing industries, for which also the raw material does not fail, is the distilling of *vodka*, a fiery grain-spirit produced too cheaply for the good of the people, who have a lighter drink in *kwas*, a sort of beer brewed from rye. Tobacco is grown for the pipes and cigarettes of the colonists, eagerly sought by the natives also. Tea, mostly of a coarse quality, is in general use, the *samovar* being the first hospitality offered to a guest. This, of course, comes from China, and the transport of Chinese tea and other wares along the great caravan route to Europe has hitherto been counted among the gains of this country, which the railway seems likely to take out of the hands of horse-breeding farmers and camel-owning nomads.

The raising of stock is an easy matter on the steppe pastures and birch-wood clearings; and in this industry Siberia needs only



On the Trans-Siberian Railway: a wayside station

Underwood &amp; Underwood

These peasants are waiting for the "post" train, on which, for a few roubles, they can travel for enormous distances.

more attention to the breed of almost wild cattle and horses, and to their care in winter, when they are often half-starved, in summer falling easy victims to a very prevalent sickness. Sheep also are reared in the south; but the wool does not seem to be turned to proper account, though whole sheepskins make a common garment in this rigorous climate. Between the steppes and a northern limit of  $60^{\circ}$  there is plenty of excellent agricultural land to be taken up under Government landlordship, large stretches being granted free to new emigrants, who can take their pick of choicer farms at the rate of under a pound for a square mile. On the central belt of black soil, even with the careless farming of the settlers, wheat yields fifteen-fold or more for some years. The product has hitherto been absorbed in the food of the country,

but only scientific farming and quicker conveyance are wanted to make the harvests of Siberia overflow into European markets, as began to be the case with the opening of railway and steamboat traffic, bringing Siberian butter and refrigerated game birds to be consumed as far off as London. In return, a great trade sprang up in agricultural implements; but a traveller half a generation ago tells us how he met in Siberia not one British commercial traveller among a hundred Germans and many American "drummers". Rye, oats, potatoes, and other vegetables are largely grown; and the peasantry would live in rough plenty but for bad seasons that now and then mar the few months of summer into which agriculture must be compressed. While the timber in many parts is much like that of Northern Europe, large fruit does not seem

often to flourish here; but currants, raspberries, and strawberries grow wild, and in the far north there is an abundance of acid berries that thrive on sub-Arctic soil, feebly represented on English heaths by such children's prizes as the bilberry and the cranberry. A small cedar nut is a plentiful dainty, and on the southern steppes melons and cucumbers come to a great size. In some parts bee-keeping proves profitable to the farmer, who, if he live near a road, can usually turn his winter leisure to good account as a teamster.

The wilder natives of Siberia are little apt to till the soil. Their best crop is the warm skins with which nature has here furnished animal life, as in the far north their herds and hardy dogs and reindeer trained to the service of man. Where a dirty Ostiak or Samoyede may deck himself out in furs that would excite a duchess's envy, hunger and cold have made men cunning hunters of shy beasts and birds, slain by all available means—by snares and decoys, by arrows, spears, and clumsy fire-arms. The widespread fires that often ravage the forests, poisoning the pastures far around with clouds of ashes, come as a godsend to the hunters, for then hosts of terrified beasts are driven into the open. The victims most sought after are naturally those whose spoils fetch a price when their flesh has been eaten. On the edge of the wilds merchants establish themselves to trade with simple natives or with better-equipped Russian hunters. The skins of Siberian sables and other martens are precious; so are those of finely coloured foxes, blue, red, white, and black, and of ermines, which, for all their renown in the trappings of dignity, seem no other than our despised stoats, glorified by the Arctic cold. Vast as is the region inhabited by these creatures, the most valuable furs grow scarcer, and threaten to become exterminated here like the beaver. The same fate is overtaking one of the kinds of deer native in Siberia, since its antlers supply a prized ingredient to Chinese medical quackery. Huge elks haunt the boggy forests, and wild reindeer the frozen tundra,

where aquatic wild-fowl afford plentiful sport, as do birds of the grouse kind in the forest zone, among them the strong-flavoured capercaillie that has been re-colonized in Scotland. On the mountains roam herds of the wild sheep called *argali*. The wolf is treated as a common foe by farmer and hunter; but in the starving north it is said that this ruthless poacher can be tamed to draw sledges, like his kinsman the dog. Other beasts, from the lynx to the squirrel, are hunted both for their flesh and skin; but the Russians share with Jews a prejudice against the hare as food, and the white fur with which it adapts itself to the winter climate is of little value. Polecats, weasels, marmots, and others must be added to the list of sub-Arctic inhabitants; and the tundra breeds countless numbers of lemmings, brightly marked rodents between the rat and the mouse in size, which, though preyed on by beast and bird, increase so fast that they are driven to migrate in millions, eating up the lean pasture as they go, then sometimes, it is said, rushing to multitudinous suicide in the sea. On the southern borders tigers occasionally appear; in the Amur region they are, indeed, perilously common and large. The great game of the northern hunter is the forest bear, that in such keen struggle for existence acquires carnivorous tastes when his autumn diet of berries fails him, and shows a ferocity which makes hand-to-hand encounter with him the most honourable exploit of Ostiak or Samoyede manhood. The ice-bear lives more out of the way of man. In past ages Siberia was inhabited by the rhinoceros, and by that large elephant known as the mammoth, whose body has been dug up to be food for dogs after lying frozen underground thousands of years. The huge tusks of these great beasts make an article of commerce, the New Siberian Islands, notably, being rich in such deposits of fossil ivory.

Fish is the main support of native tribes living on the Arctic shores and rivers. The most valuable inhabitants of the northern waters, whales and seals, the sea-lion and the sea-otter, have been too much hunted

## Siberia and its People



Siberia: a summer tent on the tundra

Underwood & Un

down; but the supply of edible fish seems inexhaustible. In the breeding season the rivers of the north-eastern coast are so full of salmon that they can be caught by hand from the water, its level visibly raised by the finny crowd. Huge sturgeon will often be taken weighing from 200 to 300 lb. The wild dogs that draw the sledges of hyperborean tribes are fed on fish, and sometimes learn, it is said, to fish for themselves in the swarming waters. There is one native race about the Amur, known to the Chinese as the "Fish-skin people", because their summer costumes are of salmon-skin, sometimes elaborately worked or embroidered. Fish-pie is a popular dish of the Russians too. The climate helps to make fish cheap, as easily stored and transportable through the winter; already frozen fish are carried over the Urals into Russian markets; and this supply will no doubt increase with the

railway traffic. In summer, fish-preserving is crippled in out-of-the-way places by a want of salt. Caviare, that treat "to the general" in Russia, is prepared from the roes of sturgeon and sterlet; and the gelatine extracted from fish makes another product.

The third head of Siberia's resources is its great mineral wealth, hardly yet estimated. Besides stones of price and gems in certain mountain districts, all the principal metals have been found in the soil, and several are mined and smelted, often by methods which would bear improvement. The largest yield comes from gold, the Siberian gold-fields having become renowned before the discoveries in California and Australia; and this inhospitable clime may still hide plentiful deposits of the precious metals. The average annual value of Siberian gold has been lately given as over £3,000,000. Some of the richest mines, along with huge

## The World of To-day

stretches of territory here, were private possessions of the imperial family, which have now been assumed by the republic as a valuable asset in Russia's strained financial state. But for the owner gold-winning is not always so profitable, and, for the workers, by no means such a romantic task, nor yet such a gloomy one, as might be imagined. Dr. Lansdell describes the famous gold-mines of Kara as like a big gravel-pit, 20 to 30 feet deep, in which sullen prisoners were busy, under charge of armed sentries, in excavating the auriferous soil and carting it off to be washed and sifted. In the final process 240 tons of earth had been refined into less than half a pint of gold-dust mingled with iron, weighing perhaps a pound. At this rate it is understood that much of the mining does not pay, unless as employing convicts; and perhaps, in the long run, the coal deposits of Siberia will prove more valuable than her gold and silver. Here, as elsewhere, the precious metals prove to have a demoralizing effect, the gold-mines being hot-beds of dishonesty and distaste for steady labour that flourish too readily on Siberian soil.

Gold and other metals were worked both by the state and by private enterprise, and by free as well as convict labour, though, indeed, free miners have seemed little better off than slaves. The condition of the much-pitied exiles condemned to this duration has made a burning question of controversy. Dr. Lansdell, for one, after carefully examining the prisons of Siberia, came to the conclusion that, however matters may have been in the past, the rigours of such a fate were now much exaggerated in popular imagination, the worst evil for the convicts often being that they have not enough to do. Mr. Kennan, on the other hand, formed a much more unfavourable opinion of the Russian Government's tender mercies, which he expressed so strongly as to be forbidden the Czar's domains where he had made such unwelcome observations. The narratives of political prisoners, who formed an incongruous element among the vulgar criminals transported here, were, of course, coloured by natural bitterness. It

must be remembered that the ordinary convict, especially of the class condemned to hard labour, is apt to be a desperate and brutalized character, often guilty of murder, which only in special cases was punished with death by Russian law; for these, prison discipline need not be too indulgent. Others, indeed, were such as in our country would be thought more fit for a lunatic asylum. Incurable drunkards and the like disturbing members of society have been sometimes got rid of by being sent to Siberia. The exiled Poles, and Russian liberals and patriots, seem usually to have been put to lighter labour, if not from the first left to themselves, and sooner or later might hope to be practically free on condition of remaining in Siberia. Many of these exiles found themselves able to carry on professions or business with a success that ameliorated their lot; and to them in no small degree has been due the leavening of Siberian boorishness. We have not full right to cry out over the fate of political offenders, suffering through the repression and resentment whose opposing forces threatened to upheave Russian society; it is only a century ago that Britain banished men to the Antipodes for the crime of advocating what now seem natural rights; and in those days our Botany Bay too had its horrors. This much may be said, that the Russian Government had become alive to the criticism of European opinion, and that some at least of its agents were concerned with the claims of humanity; while many of the luckless victims of its suspicion had sore cause to sigh out that Russian proverb: "Heaven is so high and the Czar so far!" The late Czar, indeed, was credited with a desire to abolish the system of political exile; yet under the reaction following the abortive revolution of 1905 it had a fresh tale of victims, who in 1917 could come back as martyrs and heroes. We may take it that such tribulation is now a memory of the past, unless the new Russia sees fit to copy the French Republic in equipping itself with an antipodal Cayenne.

As already hinted, the revolution threw Siberia into a confusion worse confounded

than that of the mother country. At first it seemed as if this dependency might serve as a base for reaction, from which Admiral Koltchak hopefully advanced to restore national order; and a considerable army of Czecho-Slovak prisoners of war was organized in the same cause, not without hesitations and dissensions. But these efforts were harassed by sporadic and spasmodic fits of ultra-revolutionary fever that threw much of the country into quarrelsome anarchy. Its Bolshevik partisans distinguished themselves by savage ferocity, as shown in the murder of the imperial family and cruel massacres of many humbler victims. Koltchak, defeated by the Soviet forces, was betrayed to hasty execution. Allied troops, coming to his assistance in insufficient strength, had to retire; their efforts paralyzed by clamour at home against any assault upon what camouflaged itself as "liberty". The most resolute interference came from Japan, that occupied Vladivostock and was suspected of a design to seize this opportunity of annexing an eastern stretch of Siberia, or at least to set up here some sort of buffer state between itself and Russia. We are as yet ill-informed of all that went on since 1917 in this vast territory, as of its present state after such an upheaval as threw it into sectional tyrannies of various shades of "redness". These political enterprises are so ill-considered and so unfit to shape any

stable organization, that it is impossible to forecast Siberia's future state. At this moment of writing, Japan keeps a hold on the eastern coast, against which intrusion a so-styled Constituent Assembly at Chita has appealed for intervention to the United States. In any case, it seems best to survey the whole region as it stood before a commotion which has shattered or broken off other members of the Russian Empire.

For administrative purposes Siberia was divided into three governor-generalships: Western Siberia; Irkutsk or Central Siberia, which includes most of what used to be known as Eastern Siberia; and the Pacific provinces of the Amur Government. These regions are subdivided into provinces, which may be mentioned under the above heads. Divisions and centres of government have been a good deal shifted, and the railway may act in still further disturbing their relations. Instead of following it from the edge of Europe, let us trace its course backwards from east to west, which will give an easier transition to the Steppe provinces on the south of its western reach, whereas, in any case, there must be a break of arrangement between Eastern Siberia and its close relations with China and Japan, these coming into the next volume, while here we are almost continuing our survey of America, its north-western corner separated from Asia by the narrow Behring Strait.

## THE EASTERN PROVINCES

The most thriving province on this side takes its title from the Amur River, on which Russia definitely established her rule only some half a century ago, at the same time acquiring the coast down to Korea. The Primorsk is the name given to her older maritime settlements, which, bordered inland by the broad Stanovoi range, for the most part a highland plateau rather than a mountain chain, now stretch from the Amur to Behring Strait. At the mouth of the Amur is the port Nikolaievsk, originally

intended as chief station of the Russian fleet in the North Pacific; but its place has since been taken by Vladivostock, prettily situated upon Victoria Bay, rechristened Peter the Great Bay, 100 miles to the south. The fact of both these harbours being ice-bound in winter tempted the Russian Government to take the first opportunity of gaining an open port on Chinese ground, as was done at Talienwan Bay; but *sic vos non vobis* came to be written upon Russia's constructions here. The Manchurian line,



## The World of To-day

whose end has passed to Japan, is left in Russian charge from Harbin to Vladivostock, this port connected also by rail with Khabarovka, the provincial capital, on the Amur, to which the Trans-Siberian railway takes a more direct route down the river, the journey to its mouth being continued by water.

Below the mouth of the Amur the so-called Gulf of Tartary should rather be called a strait separating the mainland from the Island of Saghalien, which, about as large as Ireland, is rich in coal, worked by convicts, who can now be brought round on shipboard through the Suez Canal. Of late years the Russian Government seemed inclined to concentrate its convict settlements here, making Saghalien the Botany Bay of Siberia. This mountainous island has a damp, raw climate, to make it a dreaded place of exile, and is thickly wooded by a mingling of the Japanese and the Manchurian flora. Japan, that gave up its claim to part ownership in exchange for the barren Kurile Islands, regained the southern half as a conquest in its war with the Czar, and seems to covet the other half also.

On the mainland, farther north, the official station Okhotsk, though little more than a village of huts, gives its name to a wide inlet of the ocean, locked in by the Kurile Islands. At the mouth of the Okota River a narrow strip of coast, outside of the eastern Siberian mountain range, curves round the Sea of Okhotsk and its northern gulfs; then the Primorsk broadens out in the basin of the Anadyr, beyond whose gulf comes the utmost northern corner of Asia with the large islands of Wrangell and St. Lawrence on either side of it, as if to guard the perilous channel that cuts off America. Almost to the point of this Chukchis promontory, as it is named from a native race the Russians found it harder to conquer than to exterminate, runs on the high land parting the feeders of the Arctic Ocean and of the Behring Sea. Across the latter, rumours of rich gold-fields have been lately attracting to this inhospitable region adventurers from Alaska.

Southward projects the long peninsula

of Kamtchatka, whose name passes almost as a synonym for frozen darkness, but its climate is stated to be less severe than on the mainland. It is traversed by a range of great volcanoes, one of them believed to be 16,000 feet high, which stretches from Alaska, through Kamtchatka, the Kurile Islands, Japan, and the Philippines to Malaysia. Kamtchatka has been Russian for two centuries. Its chief product is furs; and fish supplies the staple food of the natives, who are vanishing before Russian traders and emigrants. The part of this earthquake-shaken country most fit for settlement is the valley of the Kamtchatka River flowing across the centre of the peninsula, where summer brings out an astonishing luxuriance of grass and flowers. Near the south end is the capital Petropaulovsk, an excellent harbour, defended against the Allies in the Crimean War, and dignified by monuments to the navigators Behring and La Pérouse; but its thousand or so of inhabitants represent the poverty of a land that, over some 85,000 square miles, contains not 12,000 people, a dozen or a score houses making a place of local note. The population of the whole coastline is put at about 100,000, with some 20,000 more on the Island of Saghalien.

The Amur, "River of the Black Dragon", formed by the confluence of the Shilka and the Argun, has a length of from 2000 to 3000 miles, entitling it to rank among the great rivers of Asia. After an erratic course, generally eastwards, it turns among the mountains of Manchuria to flow northwards through the Russian Primorsk, where its broad channel opens into the Gulf of Tartary by a marshy delta. Near the bend it is joined by the Sungari, flowing from the south through Manchuria, so that, as far as general direction goes, this might be taken for the main stream. From the same direction comes in the Ussuri, that separates Manchuria from the Primorsk. Higher up, the Amur's left bank makes the border of the Russian Amur Province, whose capital is Blagovestchensk, a quite modern town on American pattern, claiming to be called a Siberian New York. Near it the river is



In the Transbaikai Province: a tent of Buriat nomads

joined by the Zeya, that has collected other drains of the northern mountains, cutting off this region from the Arctic waters.

The Amur valley has been styled the Garden of Siberia, its slopes luxuriantly wooded and its plains growing grass as high as a man. The broad shallow river breaks into channels, enclosing islets fringed with white sand, so gay in summer with leaves and blossoms as to seem like "floating flower-beds". Where it forces its way through the Manchurian mountains, the scenery is described by Dr. Lansdell and other travellers as very picturesque. "Almost every minute the picture changed, hill, forest, and cliff giving variety to the prospect as we wound our way through the defile. Here and there were tiny cascades breaking over the steep rocks to the edge of the river, and occasionally a little meadow nestled in a ravine. At times one seemed completely enclosed in a lake, from which there was no escape visible save by climbing the hills, and it was impossible to discover

any trace of an opening half a mile ahead." When leafless and buried under snow, as seen by Mr. Lionel Gowing in his adventurous winter drive across Siberia, or when swept by tempestuous *purgas*, this district presents a less charming aspect; but on the whole the moist winds of the Pacific give it a milder climate and richer production than belong to most parts of Northern Asia; then access by sea and by the river appears to promise it rapid prosperity, as yet only in the bud.

The Amur is navigable to the western edge of the province, beyond which steamers pass some way up the Shilka, its left-hand tributary. The Shilka is the chief stream of the Transbaikai Province, so called from Lake Baikal making its western boundary. This long highland lake, known to the Mongolians as the "Holy Sea", is the largest reservoir of fresh water in Asia, its area of 14,000 square miles having to be multiplied by its depth, which in some parts is as much as 4500 feet, far below the level

## The World of To-day

of the sea. It seems to consist of two original basins now merged over a rocky ridge. The beautifully transparent depths are walled in by grand precipices at the foot of snowy mountains, below which hot springs abound as a hint of volcanic energy still sometimes displayed in earthquakes. The road to China crossed the frozen lake in winter, and it was originally schemed to carry the trains over on a huge ferry by the help of ice-breaking machinery supplied from Newcastle; but to make surer against delay, through storms and fogs frequent here, the line has now been taken round the southern end. The country to the east is a mixture of mountain and plain, reminding Dr. Lansdell sometimes of the Wiltshire Downs and sometimes of the English lakes. Through it runs the great Arctic watershed, here bending round to the north under the name of the Yablonoi or Apple-tree Mountains, a name suggested by their rounded summits, that at a height of a few thousand feet give easy passage.

Sheltered by mountains from the moist ocean winds, the Transbaikal has a dry climate; and even on the hills there may be little snow in winter. Thanks partly to its being on the highway to China, it is at present rather less thinly populated than the Amur Province, having some half-million of people dispersed about its mountainous surface, in extent nearly equal to

the late German empire. The capital is Chita, on the Ingoda, one of several streams that unite in the Shilka. Lower down comes Nertchinsk, chief town of a mineral district, in which are the noted gold-mines of Kara, where 2000 convicts were once kept at work; there are also silver-mines, now, we hear, discontinued as unprofitable. Selenginsk, towards the western end, has an interest for us as formerly seat of an English mission that has left graves as its only monuments. At Verhneudinsk turns off from the line an old road to Kiakhta, on the Chinese frontier, lively market and custom-house of the tea trade, where hitherto the bales of brick-tea were sewn up for their sledge journey, after being jolted across Mongolia on camel-back; but a railway will put an end to this industry. Three towns, indeed, are grouped near the little brook that separates the two empires, Kiakhta, the abode of the Russian merchants; Troitzkosavsk, a little way off on the Siberian side, the two together containing about 10,000 people; then, beyond a narrow neutral zone, the green dome of Kiakhta's cathedral is faced by a red pagoda in Maimachin, the Chinese frontier station, where no women are allowed to live. Within the Russian border, hereabouts, Chinamen are found thriving among the Buryat natives, who have a local Mecca in the Buddhist shrines about the "Lake of Geese".

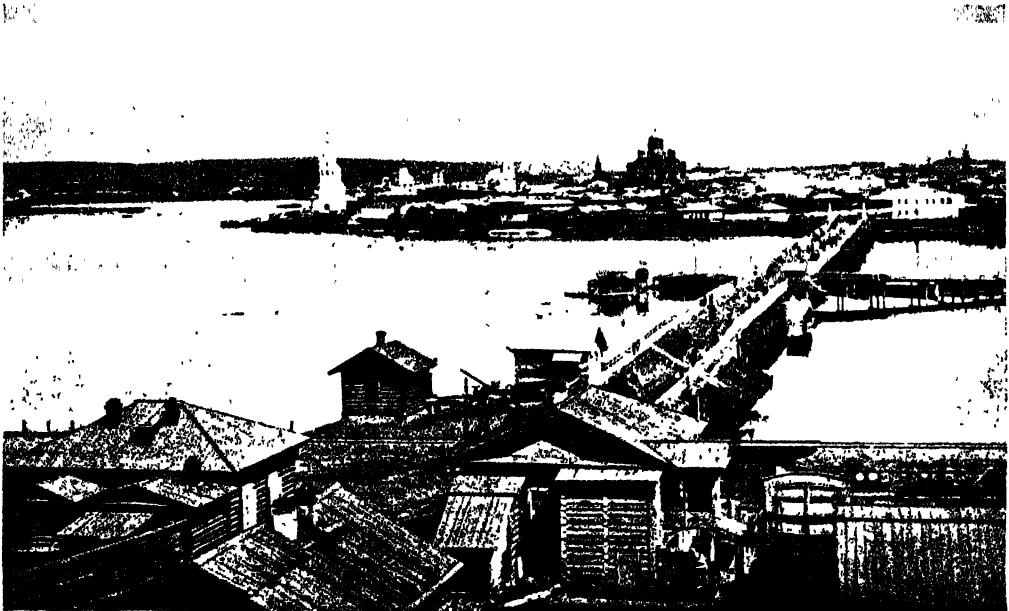
## CENTRAL SIBERIA

Lake Baikal, filled by the Mongolian rivers Selenga and Orkhon, united in one stream, near its south-western end discharges itself through the gorges and rapids of the Angara into the Yenisei, whose basin makes one of the provinces of what used to be called Eastern Siberia, but is now rather Central Siberia, officially known as the Government of Irkutsk. The name comes through the small Irkut River joining the Angara at Irkutsk, a place of over 100,000 people who think it the "Paris of Siberia", though as yet it has been noted rather for

crime and dissipation than for culture, at one time so infested by time-expired convicts that, to supplement a police most efficient against honest men, the citizens had to organize Vigilance Committees after the example of San Francisco in its lawless days. This "White City", as it also styles itself, stands on an elevated tongue between the two rivers, well displaying the domes of a fine cathedral and other public buildings it can boast, though more than once it has been ruined by such a conflagration as makes quick havoc among the wooden dwellings

of Siberia. By a bridge of boats and a ferry across the Angara it communicates with a transpontine suburb of villas which has somehow come by the exotic name Glasgow; and here is the station of the railway some way out of the city. The province that takes its name from Irkutsk is rather larger than Transbaikalia, but not

intelligent as well as hardy, and who alone seem to be increasing instead of dwindling away. To their hunting and fishing industries a region rich in minerals is mainly given up, while some of them are wealthy in cattle and horses. Captain Cochrane, that most enterprising of Siberian travellers, tells us how they would wade waist-high in



The Siberian "White City"—Irkutsk, at the junction of the Irkut and Angara Rivers

Irkutsk is a wooden city which has more than once been ruined by wholesale conflagrations. The Cathedral, which is prominent in the view, was originally built of wood in 1693. Destroyed by fire, it was replaced by the present stone structure, now some 200 years old. The bridge across the Angara River connects the city and its suburb, Glasgow; and the building in the foreground is the railway station.

quite so well populated. It has other towns, such as Nijni-Udinsk and Talanovskoye, which from their position on the railway may soon grow into importance.

In the same Government, stretching north of Irkutsk to the Arctic Ocean, and east almost to the Pacific shore, is the huge province of Yakutsk, almost as large as half of Europe, with a population not equal to that of many English towns. Its name comes from the Yakuts, whom Professor Keane styles the "most energetic and versatile" of all the Siberian natives,

the ice-water, towing his boat; and other travellers have been amazed to find women gossiping bare-armed, and children running about stark-naked in the open air below freezing-point; indoors they prefer to sit unclothed, basking in the stuffy warmth of an oil-lamp. These "men of iron" had need to make light of cold, for their country seems to have the severest winter climate in the inhabited world, where frost and snow may be looked for in the summer months, even after a scorching day. The coldest town is stated to be Verkhoyansk,

just within the Arctic Circle, where the New Year may bring down the glass to about 50° C. below freezing-point. This is on the River Yana, flowing north from the Verkoiansk Mountains, in the centre of the province, a wildly picturesque range that farther east sends down two other great streams, the Indigirka and the Kolima, on which latter river, far into the north-eastern wilds, was the most dreaded circle of the inferno reserved by the Czars for political exiles, not so gloomy, indeed, as its repute, according to Mr. Harry de Windt's experience.

"The temperature of Verkoiansk is seldom less than 60° and is often more than 78° below zero from November till March. Hot water spilt on the ground, any time during the winter, freezes solid in 30 seconds, and metal sears the flesh like a live coal. Strange to say, this region is wonderfully healthy. Pulmonary complaints in Yakutsk and Verkoiansk are almost unknown, and a cold in the head vanishes before you are aware of it. The native huts are heated up to over 80° F., but you can with impunity emerge into 40° below zero without putting on furs. And the cloudless blue sky and bright sunshine that accompany these low temperatures almost atone for their drawbacks."

To the south of that central range the little city Yakutsk was founded, 1632, on the Lena, chief river of this region, which, rising in the mountains west of Lake Baikal, from the other side of which comes its tributary the Vitim, has a northward course as long as the Amur's. At the city of Yakutsk, in the heart of the province, the river is already over 2 miles wide, and twice as broad in its summer floods, swollen by tributaries as large as the Rhine, of which little more is known than their names; yet to these wilds a railway is projected from Irkutsk. After draining a million of square miles, the Lena falls into the Arctic Sea by a delta sometimes blocked by ice even throughout the summer. Off the deep gulfs of this inhospitable coast the New Siberia group of considerable islands are visited by man only in the short summer.

To the west of Yakutsk another enormous

province, Yeniseisk, is formed by the basin of the Yenisei, about as large as that of the Lena, and rather less thinly populated. The chief city is not that called Yeniseisk, but Krasnoïarsk, to the south, one of the most agreeable places in Siberia, with a population growing on to 100,000. The Yenisei is almost as long as the Obi (3250 miles), having, if its affluents through Lake Baikal be taken in, an estimated course of nearly 3000 miles. Its broad flood falls into the sea by a long gulf, open to navigation only for a few weeks in summer, but having one shelter against furious northern gales in Dickson Haven, to which cargoes of grain can be floated down on rafts and boats, there broken up for timber. It was Professor Nordenskjöld who showed the way to this harbour, anticipating in the adventure our English Captain Wiggins, who had already taken the first steamer up the neighbouring Gulf of Obi. Following the lead of these pioneers, a certain amount of precarious ocean traffic is now carried on with the great rivers of Siberia, which, in the case of the Obi and the Yenisei, are connected by a canal, or rather by canalized streams, running through the silent primeval forest, where, once in hours' steaming, may be seen a Siberian hamlet or a tent of wandering Tunguses.

Even in a wilderness, the Russian peasant is gregarious, a turn fostered in him by the *Mir* system of communal property; and his monotonous villages can be thus described by Mr. Lindon Bates (*The Russian Road to China*):

"Each night brings us to a different home but never to a changed environment or atmosphere. This type of life is found, not only among the Trans-Baikal peasantry, but throughout all Siberia. The log-houses down the long straggly village streets look out upon the same wooden-walled courtyards—the women peering from their little windows as the sleighs jingle past. The same ikons with burning lamps look down as you enter; the same whitewashed oven and shelf and cradle are there as you push open the felted door. The women of each district wear the same traditional costume. The bearded host produces the same vodka. One of the most impressive sights, when one drives

out before dawn into the frosty air, is to see at almost the same moment from every chimney the black smoke roll upwards, then dwindle to a thin grey streak. Each woman has risen and

heaped green wood into the cooking-oven. It is as if one will actuated simultaneously all the people."

## WEST SIBERIA

The basin of the Obi, which, with its great tributary the Irtysh taken into account, rivals the Yenisei as the longest of Siberian rivers, makes the Government of West Siberia. This, as long least inaccessible, is the typical Siberia depicted in books of the past—a flat, monotonous plain, covered by lush grass and woods of white-stemmed birch, cleared off over the fertile belt that now becomes more chequered with fields and pastures round the log-huts of settlers. To the north these are shut in by thick forest, where only rare clearings have been made about the rivers; then comes the tundra region, home of the rude Ostiaks and Samoyedes, whose kinsmen occupy Northern Europe as far as Lapland.

West Siberia is divided into two provinces, Tomsk and Tobolsk. Tomsk, the more thickly-populated part, lies to the south, where the Obi comes down from the Altai mountain mass that, under various names, curves round two sides of Siberia. The name Altai means "Gold Mountains", and this group is rich in valuable stones as well as metals. Barnaul is the chief town in the highland district, where the Obi is navigable up to Bysk. Farther down, on the Tom, a tributary of the Obi, is Tomsk, the provincial capital, distinguished as the seat of the Siberian University, founded in 1880. This is a place of over 100,000 people and a centre of trade and mining industry, which might have thriven still more had it not chosen to stand off the main line of the Trans-Siberian Railway, and must now be content with a branch. Some twentieth part of this population are Poles, whose Catholic faith binds them together, and they have not yet forgotten the native land from which their fathers were exiled. Like other Siberian cities this has suffered from fire, also from annual floods on the

breaking up of the ice, which, as Colonel Ward saw in 1918, yielded a ghastly display of corpses of the Revolution's countless victims.

Tobolsk is a larger province, in the centre of which unite the Irtysh and the Obi. Higher up, on a commanding site at the confluence of the Irtysh and Tobol, stands the city of Tobolsk, seat of the archbishop, and at one time capital of all Siberia, so that it figured more in former accounts of Siberian travel than it is likely to do for the future. Its tall stone pillar to Yermak the Cossack, first conqueror in this land, seems a monument of its own past, for, being far off the railway, it has not much chance of keeping its old place among Siberian towns. The present administrative centre for this, as well as for the Steppe region to the south, seems to be Omsk, at the confluence of the Om and the Irtysh, on the southern edge of the province. With a wide range of river navigation, reached in summer by an occasional ocean steamboat, Omsk has grown fast to be the largest town of Siberia (140,000), and goes on growing beside the Trans-Siberian Railway, whose station, indeed, is a league from the city; but that seems a trifle in a country of such vast distances, where some towns stand still farther off their stations. Tobolsk has steamboat communication with the now larger Tiumen, on the western edge of the province, which prospers as terminus of a railway from Perm and as a knot of trading routes. It claims to be the oldest settlement, a fort having been built here by Cossack invaders in the sixteenth century, before the founding of Tobolsk and Tomsk. Near Tobolsk was Sibir, the Tartar town that stood godfather to the whole country.

We are now on the outskirts of Asia, among the scenes of that "Exile of Siberia",

## The World of To-day

the suppliant pilgrim whose adventures found Tobolsk in much the same state as are more remote provinces at the present day. Irbit, to the north of the Perm railway line, has long been important as a seat of a great fair that in February turns a village to a busy town. Farther west, upon this railway, here joined by a branch of the main line, comes Ekaterinburg, a place about the same size as Tiumen, but more like a European town, prosperous through the mining industries of the Ural region, from which come masses of malachite, jasper, jacinth, and other valuable crystalline stones, as well as sparkling gems, among them the rare Alexandrite, that shows crimson and green according as seen by day or night. The cutting and polishing of these is done at Ekaterinburg, already mentioned under Russia as a city which belongs both to Europe and to Asia.

On maps the low barrier of the Ural Mountains is often represented as the frontier of Siberia, and by the road crossing them stands a boundary stone on which one

may sit with one leg in each continent; but a western strip of Siberian territory was reckoned within the European-Russian province of Perm. The three border stations on the railway are named Asia, Ural, and Europe. This line from Perm, the first to enter Siberia, now connected with Petrograd, was not used as the great Trans-Siberian route, which ran farther south from Moscow by Samara on the Volga, having Chelyabinsk, hitherto an unknown little town in the same European-Asian zone, for the frontier junction of the Petrograd and Moscow rails, where emigrants are taken in charge to be dispatched over Siberia.

A certain confusion in Siberian statistics is caused by that overlapping of continental and provincial limits, still more by the fact of the West Siberian Government having extended southwards into the Steppes of Central Asia, which we must consider under a separate head, while now, to be sure, all old landmarks of Russian Asia may have gone into the melting-pot of revolution.



Vladivostok Harbour

## RUSSIAN CENTRAL ASIA

The physical, political, and ethnical features of Siberia merge into those of Central Asia, whose characteristics again overflow into Eastern Europe. West of its central mountain masses the fertile Siberian plains become the Steppes, extending southwards to Russian Turkestan. Here it will be enough to name the Steppe provinces attached to the Government of West Siberia—Semipalatinsk with its chief town of this name, Semiretchinsk, Akmolinsk, Turgai, and Uralsk—before including in a general view the whole of that region whose only natural boundary is a ridge across the Steppes, separating the waters of the Arctic Ocean from those which lose themselves in the Aral and Caspian Seas. Fresh features will then be apparent to the south, where among rich oases still exist remnants of old civilization in our time enveloped by Russian authority.

*Steppe* is a Russian word denoting the spacious plains which cover this side of Asia, and stretch into Europe, their common aspect, a sea of grass, contrasting with the corn-lands and forests to the north, the mountains to the east, and the bare deserts to the south. In some parts they present more variety than is associated with the name; their horizons may be bounded by jagged heights, through whose valleys the watercourses often spread out as lakes or strings of stagnant pools that, for want of an outlet, curdle at their shrinking edge into a scum of salt and a blighting efflorescence like snow, about which thrive but scrubby heath or stunted bushes. In the stream-beds may be hidden clumps of timber, else a tree is so rare a sight as to form a landmark; and the marshy hollows are filled rather with forests of

reeds and rushes. On the richer soil all other vegetation is choked off by tall bearded grass, but poorer spots are spangled by the breath of summer with a profusion of rainbow-coloured tulips, lilies, and other blooms, all the brighter at first in contrast with the sere shades of last year's stubble. The naturalist Brehm, who saw beauty even in the dismal tundra, gives a gay picture of what spring may do here.

"After a few weeks the steppeland lies like a gay carpet in which all the tints show distinctly, from dark-green to bright yellow-green, the predominant grey-green of the wormwoods being relieved by the deeper and brighter tones of more prominent herbs and dwarf shrubs. The dwarf-almond, which, alone or in association with the pea tree and the honeysuckle, covers broad stretches of low ground, is now, along with its above-mentioned associates, in all its glory. Its twigs are liberally covered all over with blossom; the whole effect is a shimmer of peach-red, in lively contrast to the green of the grass and herbage, to the bloom of the pea trees, and even to the delicate rose-red or reddish-white of the woodbine. In suitable places the woodbine forms quite a thicket, and when in full bloom seems to make of all surrounding colour but a groundwork on which to display its own brilliancy. Various, and to me unknown, shrubs and herbs give high and low tones to the picture, and the leaves of others, which wither as rapidly as they unfold, become spots of yellow-green and gold. Seen from a distance all the colours do indeed merge into an almost uniform grey-green; but near at hand each colour tells, and one sees the countless individual flowers which have now opened, sees them singly everywhere, but also massed together in more favourable spots, where they make the shade of the bushes glorious."

The greater part of this region lies low,



but it is ill-sheltered from northern winds, so that the climate, while less severe than in Siberia, is one of extremes, great sun-heat being followed by sharp frosts which hold the ground for a longer or shorter time in winter. With the rain-bearing winds of the warmer seas barred by high ranges, the Steppes have the Central Asian dryness; and the inland seas, poorly fed by their mountain snows, are undergoing a constant desiccation. In the south of the Russian domain there are large patches of veritable desert; but for the present let us confine our view to the grassy plains inhabited by the Kirghiz hordes.

The Steppes are often vaguely spoken of as Tartary; and the name Tartar (properly Tatar) is used in the same loose way, having been incorrectly stamped on European memory through the terror inspired by Genghiz Khan's fierce followers, for whom Tartarus seemed a fitting breeding-ground. Ethnologists have no easy task in unravelling the confusion of Asian racial blendings. The so-called Tartars of the East are purer Mongols, showing markedly the roundish, thinly-bearded, and almond-eyed faces which we associate with a Chinaman. As one passes westward into Turkestan these features become modified among the Turki tribes, in which there seems to have been some mingling of Caucasian with Mongol blood. Not less marked is the change of religion, Moham-medanism now taking the place Buddhism holds among the Tartars of the East. The largest of the Moslem races is the Kirghiz, who, to the number of some three millions, inhabit the Steppes, divided into three main hordes, and subdivided into many tribes, with their khans or chiefs all paying allegiance and tribute to Russia, under whose military rule, dominating their own patriarchal institutions, they had become peaceable enough, though the name Kirghiz is said to mean robber, and a turn for horse-stealing still testified to a strain of that old character. The larger part call themselves Kazaks, which appears to be the same name as Cossack; another division, dwelling rather in the highlands, are known as the Kara (black) Kirghiz.

Like their half-brothers of Mongolia, the Kirghiz are little concerned to till the soil, for the most part ill-fit for tillage. Almost cradled on horseback, they roam about the Steppes, now on the wide plains, now up the moister mountain slopes, seeking the best pasture for the flocks in which consists their wealth. Horses are their most prized possession and their standard of value, a rich man owning thousands, fed in separate herds, while he is poor indeed who does not have at least half a dozen. They keep great flocks of sheep and goats, the former of that fat-tailed kind which sometimes require a little cart to support such a burdensome appendage; the latter long-haired, commonly white with black markings. Both are herded together under the charge of lads, who often ride oxen, and can stir these heavy steeds to a surprising pace; but cattle do not figure so much among the stock of the Kirghiz. Some have flocks of camels, and all to help in the herding keep dogs, which here begin to improve from the savage curs of the Far East into that intelligent and faithful companion of man known in Europe. From the wool of sheep they make the felt that walls their tent dwellings; the long hair of the camel and the goat are woven into cloth and trappings, and horse-hair into cords and reins. Sheepskins as well as wool come in for dress in the cold winter; the hides furnish whips, thongs, leather bottles, and the big boots worn by the Kirghiz with their long robes and thick head-dresses. Their food is chiefly milk and meat, the milk of all their animals being used; that of sheep and goats turned into curds, cheese, and butter, and that of mares and camels fermented into the *koumiss* or milk-wine which has been introduced to Europe as a strengthening beverage. Something like it is, or used to be, drunk in our Orkney Islands under the name of "bland".

By selling the surplus of his herds and their produce the owner provided himself with means to pay taxes to the Russian authorities, to buy firearms, iron for fashioning into blades, silver for their adornment, and to deck out his smoky *yurt* with a show of costly rugs, beautifully embroidered silks,



Nomad Kirghiz Women outside their Movable Homes

and quilted bedding. Sometimes, besides these movable tents, he has a fixed home, built commonly of plaited willows or reeds, where he passes the winter with a stock of hay to help his flocks through the lean months that may starve both man and beast. So long as things go well with him he lives in rude plenty, loving horse-races, wrestlings, the plaintive minstrelsy which is his unwritten literature, and jovial wedding feasts when a young man's family has beaten down the price of a maid to the number of horses she seems worth. The marriage ceremonies are elaborate, showing traces of heathen customs overlaid by Moslem rites, though mosques and mollahs will not be met with every day on the Steppes. At funerals, to which neighbours may be summoned from 50 miles around, the master's favourite horse has its tail cut, and a year later, when the period of mourning is ended, comes to be slaughtered at his grave, for a great man covered by

such a dome of wood or brick as forms a landmark on the loneliness of these plains.

The Steppes have wild animals as well as tame ones. They abound in beautiful birds as well as in vipers and other venomous reptiles, and in burrowing creatures like the pretty and shy jerboa that steals out only by night, jumping along in jerks so as to suggest a tiny kangaroo, with cautious eye for the eagles and hawks that have a sharp eye for him. The great golden eagle is trained by the Kirghiz, as by other hunters of Asia, to serve as a falcon, flown at foxes, even at wolves that haunt the reed thickets, where the boar keeps company with wild fowl. On the steppes and their hills may be sighted fleet antelopes, herds of *koulans*, wild horses, and the great huge-horned argali wild sheep. Fierce beasts of prey are rare, but the Steppe has two frequent plagues in its clouds of mosquitoes and ravaging swarms of locusts.

## The World of To-day

The region of the Kara Kirghiz, though included in the Steppe Government, should rather go with Turkestan, unless in respect of its being an older Russian conquest. At the corner where meet China, Siberia, and the Steppe region there is a fine country of lakes and mountains, drained into Lake Balkash, the "Denghiz" or sea, as it is also called, whose slightly brackish waters stretch for over 300 miles between the provinces of Semipalatinsk and Semiretchinsk. So far from being overflowed by the rivers that pour into it, this appears gradually to be choked up with their detritus, as it is known to have been once far more extensive. The chief of these feeders is the Ili, flowing from mountains to the south-east, where, says M. Reclus, Central Asia has no such magnificent scenes as those at the foot of the glaciers crowned by Khan-Tengri, "King of the Heavens".

The head of the Ili valley is Chinese territory, having been restored by Russia after a temporary occupation during Yakoub Khan's rebellion. The lower part and all the "Land of Seven Rivers" formed one of the richest of Russia's Asian possessions, as yet having some million inhabitants, a medley of Kirghiz and Kalmucks with Chinese traders and Russian settlers, who make Semiretchinsk the most populated of the Steppe provinces, to which, indeed, it only half belongs in natural characteristics. Vernoye is the capital, lying in an agricultural district between the Ili and Lake Issik-kul towards the southern border, on which lake the town of Karakol has been worthily renamed after the Russian explorer Prejevalsky. At the north-east corner, under the Ala-tau Mountains fringing Zungaria, lie the beautiful Lake Ala-kul and other outlying fragments of Lake Balkash, in which direction Kopal makes a place of some note among the Kirghiz camps. But it is on the fertile lands of the Ili we may expect to hear of new towns springing up, perhaps to become as famous in Asian history as once were Kuldja and others that are now half-forgotten ruins. The mountains appear to be rich in various minerals.

Semipalatinsk, to the north of Lake

Balkash, has a capital of the same name built on the Irtysh, near the border of the Tomsk Province. Thence, dotted here and there by small settlements, the other Steppe provinces stretch away westward to the Caspian Sea, before touching which they are broken by a line of hills that continue the Ural Mountains to the Aral Sea.

The vast Steppes, whose vigorous and numerous communities seem to be held in solution, as it were, by the Russian empire, form a transition between Siberia and the more varied aspects of the southern provinces to which applies much of what has been said above as to race and climate. The whole of what is known as Russian Central Asia—a name criticized by geographers as not fitting its present extent—measures about 1500 miles from east to west and 1000 miles from north to south, with a population of five or six millions, increased by two or three millions if we take in the enclosed dependencies of Khiva and Bokhara. The chief Turki stock in the south are the Usbeks, the most civilized people of Central Asia, who alone possess something like a literature, and among whom still exist monuments of an historic past. These have blended with Iranian blood, forming the mixed race called Tajiks; and the name Sarts is much used for the settled inhabitants of towns. The most warlike race are the Turkomans on the Persian border, descendants or heirs of the ancient Parthians, with whom the Russians have had hard fighting as the Romans had with their ancestors. The conquest of this domain is in the memory of the last generation. It cost Russia dearly in money and lives, but seemed to be complete so far as concerns the wild warriors, who could respect foemen worthy of their steel, while the enveloped khanates were allowed to remain under their native sovereigns, overshadowed by such a protectorate as we exercise over once-powerful kingdoms beyond the Himalayas. The Russians showed little desire to supplant native institutions by their own customs or religion; and the conquered subjects were left to choose local magistrates, under the absolute control of military governors.

The southern part of Russian Central Asia is divided into two provinces of Turkestan and Transcaspia, separated by the khanates Khiva and Bokhara. The general characteristic of this region is that its waters drain into brackish inland seas or are swallowed up by the soil which they exhaust themselves in fertilizing. Salt is here an abundant natural product; and at least one part hides the sulphur of long-silent volcanoes. The climate is still one of extremes, the snows of winter coming as a welcome relief to travellers on waterless plains baked by a fiercer sun than thaws the Siberian ice. The monotony of the Steppes here becomes a more broken configuration of mountain and plain, but most of the plain is desert sand always threatening to encroach upon the fertile oases, which incessant labour keeps green by economizing and directing the flow of the streams that to a great extent are thus spent before losing themselves in the thankless wilderness. The two chief rivers, famous of old as the Oxus and the Jaxartes, are the modern Amu-daria and Sir-daria, which, rising in the Central Asian mountain group, find their way north-westward to the Sea of Aral, now entering it at the south and north ends respectively. These rivers, and others of the region, have repeatedly changed their course, so that an ancient bridge may be seen high and dry on the desert, and dusty desolation has overtaken the ruins of fortresses, shrines, and caravanseries in what once were flourishing oases.

The salt Sea of Aral, in spite of such affluents, goes on shrinking within its old bounds. It is at present about as large as Belgium and Holland put together, but on the east side has become little better than a flooded marsh, always tending to dry up into sand, while small islands emerge from its shallow bed, that may have been smaller in ancient days when the Oxus is supposed to have run into the Caspian Sea. This, still the largest of salt-water lakes, at a lower level than the Aral, receives the Volga, the greatest river of Europe, and others, which are slowly filling in with their silt what may have been once the end of a West-Asian

Mediterranean, like that we shall see traced in the desert depressions of the East; but here we come upon ground of scientific controversy. The Caspian and the Aral are separated by a barren waste, over which, by canalizing an old river-bed that runs part of the way, the Russians have proposed to open a communication between the two.

Without too much concerning ourselves with administrative nomenclature and boundaries that seemed not to be firmly fixed, let us visit these new acquisitions of Russia, as far as possible, along the line of the railways by which she has lost no time in consolidating and preparing to extend her authority. The first made was the Trans-Caspian, running round the southern edge of her provinces and bending north to the chief city Tashkend, where it has since been joined by a rail from Samara on the Trans-Siberian route, entering the Steppe provinces at the frontier town of Orenburg. These two form a semicircle, throwing out branches here and there, designed not only to open up the country, but as conductors for the military power of Russia. Where, a generation or so back, adventurous journeys were undertaken by Europeans at peril of their lives, English tourists have now been conducted to Samarkand, received with a polite welcome on the part of the Russian authorities, not always so hospitable to travellers spying about the remote borders where Russia has been credited with studying approaches to a neighbouring empire. Foreigners have had everywhere to get permission to enter these Asian territories, to which it is hoped that railroads will restore something of their old commercial prosperity, whose springs began to dry up centuries ago, through the diversion of trade by ocean routes between Europe and Asia. But progress will depend on orderly government, at present but ill-assured, as the Russian Revolution spread Bolshevik *emeutes* so far as Merv and Bokhara, Samarkand and Tashkend; and we are so ill-informed as to what has been going on here during the recent distractions that the following account may soon call for revision at several points.

## TRANSCASPIA

The starting-point of the Trans-Caspian line, more than once changed, is now at Krasnovodsk, on the desert eastern shores of the Caspian, reached by twenty hours' crossing from Baku, the refuse of whose famous oil-wells supply a cheap fuel for the locomotives, that at some points have to be provided with water by storage in large tanks. The carriages are comfortable in their up-to-date arrangements for sleeping, eating, &c., and more roomy than on most European lines, the Russian railways having a broad 5-foot gauge. Skirting the Balkan Bay of the Caspian, with mountains on either side, the traveller soon catches sight of the desert, not at first the hopeless, sandy waste, but a brown alluvial soil that to make it fertile needs only the element here so valuable that the railway carries tuns of water distilled from the Caspian Sea, to supply its employees at their lonely posts. Every prospect shows how man, beast, and plants depend on this one need, significantly illustrated by the Persian word for water being root of that which means culture or civilization.

The line runs along the foot of the Khorassan range, the "Edge of the World" as the Persians call this borderland of their country. On the other side opens out the great Kara-kum, "Black Desert", stretching dismally away to the Oxus oases, with an area great as that of the British Isles. Its worst parts are described by Lord Curzon as a perfectly level expanse, plastered over with sun-cracked and blistered marl, or with a thin layer of crystalline salt so hard that a camel hardly leaves the print of its heavy foot, and the mountain torrents, unable to pierce this crust, dribble away in pools on the surface, sometimes broken also by billowed and rippled sand-dunes, beneath which lie lost the bones of unhappy travellers, even villages and oases overwhelmed by invading *barkhans*. "Ever and anon a solitary sand-column, raised by a passing puff of air, starts up, and, giddily

revolving on its fragile axis, whirls away over the plain." Here and there may be seen circular or oval tumuli, monuments of the dead, if not piled up above the wreck of forgotten dwelling-places, and black encampments of the Turkomans, who up to our time lived mainly by plundering and enslaving their neighbours with such cruelty that the strongest Russophobe must admit a change of masters to be for the better.

Commerce was carried on at much disadvantage here, when any caravan that attempted to slink by the edge of the desert might indeed reach Khiva or Bokhara, but only to be sold, men and goods, for the benefit of ruthless capturers. On the Caspian, too, the Turkomans played the pirate as the robber on land, and pushed their rapid raids far into Persia. By Russia they were now bound to keep the peace, while their martial tastes might still find scope in the military service of their conqueror. Some of them remain pure nomads, with the desert for their roomy home; others are settled in *auls*, villages of round-roofed felt tents, in the oases, which have been made fertile by slave-labour of kidnapped Persians and Afghans. The Turkoman had his good points, like other bold Ishmaelites: if he robbed, he did not cheat; he was hospitable as well as truthful; he cherished the trusty courser, on whose swiftness he must depend for life and living at the expense of his victims; and he has shown the common-sense merit of knowing when he was hopelessly beaten; but, under the yoke of civilization, his simple virtues are said to be corrupting through drink and opium as much as by the loss of proud independence. As a gentler trait of character, these people are passionate chess-players, who on the railway may be seen provided with chequered handkerchiefs and wooden pieces to take any opportunity for their favourite game.

Outside the oases what flourishes best is the deep-rooted shrub called saxaul, whose



Merv: a school in the *aul* (oasis village)

This is a scene in ancient Merv, which, after many vicissitudes, exists now only as leagues of crumbling walls and shapeless mounds. New Merv, built by the Russians, is 10 miles from the old city.

gnarled, brittle, but hard wood, economized as charcoal, makes the fuel of the desert. With hedges of this and of other vegetation, making head where its roots have anchored the soil, the railway has to be bordered to keep it from being snowed up by sand, yet often trains are blocked for hours, or delayed by the breaking down of bridges in summer floods. At the best the pace is under 20 miles an hour on this line. Under the mountains it strings together stretches of more or less reclaimed land, on which the Tekke-Turkomans, once the most formidable tribe of this people, began to take to more industrious courses. In their high sheepskin busbies and long, dressing-gown robes, these doughty warriors cut a formidable figure, yet it is hard to realize how

lately their country was scene of that desperate struggle, ended by General Skobelev's slaughter of thousands in Geok Tepe, a gigantic earthen stronghold, two or three miles in circuit, by the ruins of which the railway runs; and a large cotton-mill shows another sign of changed times. Like our Sikhs and Rajpoots, this race that made the best fight for their freedom bade fair to be Russia's best subjects.

Beyond comes Askabad, the Russian capital of the province, a new town with already 50,000 people, but it has a bad name for being dull and unhealthy. The life-giving waters, where not turned to profit, are, over this region, apt to spread into fever-breeding marshes and stagnant pools; and the Russian army probably lost more

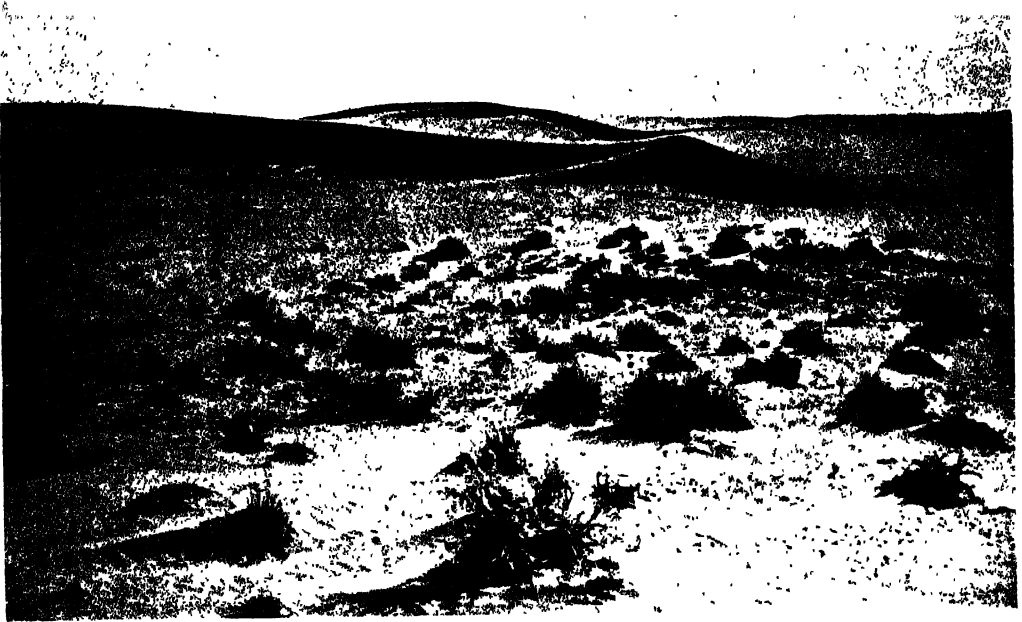
men by disease than in the fierce struggle of the conquest. This official centre treated itself to a Simla some way up the Kopet Dag range on the Persian side. Near it are the ruins of Anaou, with an imposing citadel built by Baber, the city itself so old that an American scientific expedition has here unearthed relics reaching back to the Stone Age. From Askabad a great trade road runs over the mountains to Meshed, in the north of Persia; and the Russians had marked out a railway branch in that direction.

The main line keeps on below the mountain frontier for some hundred miles, then bends eastward towards Merv, crossing the Tejend River, which flows from Afghanistan to lose itself in the desert sands. To the south here lie two considerable oases, Sarakhs on the Tejend, and Penjdeh on the Murghab River farther east. Leaving the mountains, the railway traverses a waste plain to gain the northern oasis, or group of oases, that takes its name from Merv. Hence a branch has been pushed down to Kushka, near the Afghan frontier, in the southernmost corner of Russian territory. The making of this military approach towards Herat stirred uneasiness in Britain, revived by Bolshevik dealings with the Afghans.

Merv, the classical Margiana, most famous name in this province, "Queen of the World" as its people fondly called it, owes its fertility to the River Murghab, that, pouring down from the Afghan mountains, exhausts itself in watering these oases, and runs out in the sands beyond, whereas once it struggled on to the Oxus. Here was repeatedly built and ruined a great city, first dimly dating from the days of Zoroaster, next from those of Alexander the Great, who left so many traces of his presence in this part of Asia; then by Arabs in the flush of their fanatical career, and again in the sixteenth century by Persian reconquerors. This was destroyed more than a century ago by its neighbours of Bokhara, and now, where the very soil has gone to dusty ruin,

exists only as leagues of crumbling walls and shapeless mounds, conspicuous among them tombs of the first Moslem conquerors. Tired of so many vicissitudes, after vainly looking round for succour, in 1884 Merv quietly submitted to the advancing Russians, who gave it order and peace from the robber raids, recalled by fortified enclosures and white watch-towers dotting the hills. The fortress of the Tekke-Turkomans, thus surrendered, was a huge earthen citadel like that of Geok Tepe; and here, on the Murghab, the Russians have built New Merv, 10 miles from the old city. This place seems destined to fresh prosperity, along with the surrounding oases, where the Russian Government has improved the irrigation system. Merv has a market in which thousands of people gather to deal in horses, camels, and sheep, but no longer in human cattle. Trees, hitherto rare and small along the line, flourish in its gardens, celebrated for their melons and grapes; but the place has a bad bill of health ever since a flood of the Murghab made it malarious. The Russians are endeavouring to introduce wine-making, and the more prosaic culture of cotton has taken strong root. The most notable native manufacture is of the Turcoman carpets, which have become well known in Europe.

With the exception of such favoured spots as Merv, Transcaspia is a poor and thinly-populated country; but its mountains contain asphalt, coal, sulphur, and other minerals, while efflorescent parts of the plain yield a crop of salt to supply a profitable trade. One of the chief imports is that universal Asian luxury tea, brought both from China and from India. On the south-east the province merges with Afghan Turkestan, through whose mountains run old trade routes by once-famous cities which firm order and peace might restore to prosperity, and some now buried in sands that have choked fertilizing canals attributed by popular legend to Alexander the Great, where fresh blight is like to come through storms of anarchy.



On the Central Asian Desert

## THE KHANATES

Having passed through the broad oasis of Merv, that extends for 40 or 50 miles beyond the river, the railway traverses another stage of desolation, where for some 100 miles the sand has been driven into *barkhans*, round-backed and sharp-edged sand-hills, curving over like breaking waves, and blown off into a spray that almost burns the skin exposed to the pestiferous hot wind of this desert. But such a forbidding prospect is succeeded by richer scenes, when, bearing north, the line enters the Khanate of Bokhara, the classical *Bactria*, across its main life-giving artery, the Amu-daria, whose bed, partly filled up by sand-banks and islands, requires here a bridge over two miles long. The stations along the line were made Russian enclaves, like New Bokhara, from which a light rail runs to the old city; and on the other side a branch was

to reach Karchi, the second place of the khanate.

Bokhara, land of the Usbeg Tartars, was left under the native emir and his begs in each district, but a Russian resident at the capital kept them from forgetting how this quasi-independence hung upon conforming to Western ideas so far as to abolish barbarous cruelties, such as the slavery which till lately reigned here unchecked. The city of Bokhara stands not upon the Amu-daria, but on what was once a northern tributary, the Zarafshan, "Scatterer of gold", whose precious current, like the Murghab's, becomes spent in giving life to the fruit-gardens, cotton plantations, and crops, that make the richest show of verdure seen on the journey from the Caspian. The rest of the country—a curved stretch of some 93,000 square miles, with a population of



## The World of To-day

2,500,000 at most, chiefly gathered upon the irrigated oases—is watered by affluents of the Amu-daria, which on its south side forms the Afghan border. In vain the Zarafshan now struggles to reach this more powerful flood. It disappears in the salt marshes and thin pastures about Karakul, where feed those curly and silky-haired lambs whose wool is known to us as astrakhan, a name imposed by the Caspian port through which this fur came into Europe. The native princes saw good reason for submitting to their Russian neighbours, who might dry up Bokhara by diverting the course of its life-blood; and, indeed, under the wing of Russia, the Emir had more power over his once turbulent vassals, from whom he could take holiday at a seaside villa in the Crimea. But, with a storm of revolution raging all round them, one cannot be sure how long these “protected” areas may keep any show of independence. A Bolshevik outbreak drove the Emir to flight; and, though there arose strong opposition among the Moslems, and offers of interference from Afghanistan, the upshot of these troubles is certain only in a prospect of bloodshed and misery.

“Bokhara the Noble” had long been a centre of Moslem culture, and one of the great marts of Asia, from which enterprising traders led their caravans far and wide. It is still a city eight or nine miles in circuit, its mud walls containing under 100,000 people, mostly of mixed race, among them a community of Jews, who had to submit to humiliating restrictions; and there are also Hindus from India. A new Russian town has been growing up about the station, several miles from Old Bokhara, where the principal building is the Ark or palace citadel, dating from the ninth century, whose high brick walls crown a height in the middle of the town. The Emir seemed not to love this imposing residence, for, besides his summer palace outside the town, he had a new stone mansion built by a German architect near the station, where the Russians probably found it easier to keep an eye upon him.

Other lions of the place are the Great

Minaret, 200 feet high, from which criminals used to be hurled headlong, and beneath it the chief mosque and *medresse*, or college, their domes covered with blue-glazed tiles. There are hundreds of mosques, tombs, and shrines, whose enamelled decorations have mostly fallen into sad disrepair, and of endowed colleges or schools which still attest Bokhara’s old reputation for learning; but fragments of decayed magnificence are but poorly set in the maze of mud walls and mean streets swarming with turbaned men and veiled women. A picturesque mingling of riches and poverty, of dirt and splendour, makes this a typical Eastern city. Not the least interesting sight is the crowded marketplace, containing thirty or forty bazaars for each branch of trade, with many caravanserais for the accommodation of merchants and their goods. Bokhara’s chief business is as a distributing centre for all the wares of the region; but it has a speciality in the manufacture of the embroidered silks made here from its celebrated mulberry trees; it is also noted for gaudy velvets spangled with gold and silver to form sumptuous trappings for horses. It has a bad point of celebrity in the *reshta*, a worm nursed in the water, producing in the human body a painful sore very common, and dangerous if the parasite should break in the gradual process of extracting it. Leprosy and other skin diseases are also common, the lepers having a separate quarter outside, where they are allowed to appeal to charity by a disgusting exhibition of their sores. In this country of glaring sand and sun the people suffer much from ophthalmia.

In the first half of the eighteenth century this city was sacked by Nadir Shah, the last great Asiatic conqueror. To Englishmen it has a sombre interest in the fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, the British envoys, done to death here in 1842 after a cruel captivity under the Usbeg tyrant Nasrullah. Their fate was ascertained by the eccentric Dr. Wolff, who boldly made his way to Bokhara dressed as an English clergyman, and perhaps came off safe through the respect paid by Moslems to a supposed lunatic. Later on, Arminius



Bokhara: fruit stalls beside the ancient palace of the Emir

Vambéry ventured to Bokhara in the disguise of a mendicant dervish, overcoming suspicion through his extraordinary linguistic skill and knowledge of Turkish scriptures. The gloomy fanaticism that long veiled this country now seems to be giving place to indifference, the fire-water of the infidel, if all stories be true, proving the most potent solvent of orthodoxy. One element of prosperity the Bokharians have lost in the slaves, by whose labour their fields and gardens were brought to such fertility. Till the Russians abolished this trade, Bokhara and Khiva were principal markets for the victims of Turkoman raids, chiefly into Persia, whose people, belonging

to the Shiah sect, the Sunnite slave-catcher counted it a pious duty to hunt down. To enslave a true believer is indeed a sin; but when the Turkomans caught a Sunnite in their net, they might torture him into professing the other version of Mohammedanism, so as to be able to sell such a heretic with a good conscience. A large proportion of slaves, even if, after years of service, they obtained their freedom, as might happen, never went back to their own country; and thus the population has become much blended with foreign blood. Russians, too, not infrequently found their way into Turkoman slavery up to a generation ago; and horrible atrocities, such as

## The World of To-day

flaying and burying alive, used to be inflicted with impunity on hapless captives of the race that came to be masters here.

Bordering on Bokhara to the north-west is the smaller Khanate of Khiva, a strip of cultivation some 200 miles long by 140 broad, on which a few hundred thousand people live through the branching and drawn-off waters of the Amu-daria. Statistics are hard to come by in Moslem lands, where superstition agrees with King David's experience as to the danger of enumerating a population. The city of Khiva, whose towers and cupolas seem monuments of bygone greatness, was at one time much in men's mouths, when the Russian advance in this direction inspired adventurers like Burnaby to daring visits. Mr. Jefferson, who made a "new ride to Khiva", with, rather than on, a bicycle, reports of it as hardly worth the trouble of coming so far to see, its mud walls crumbling away, and its fields often degenerating into malarious morasses round the fortified houses and towns that tell of a troubled past. In places, indeed, the soil is still rich, apples, mulberries, peaches, grapes, and other fruit flourishing in the gardens, whose melons are particularly renowned, as the peaches and grapes of Bokhara. The chief export is cotton, and the chief manufacture the glazed bricks that make a striking feature

in mosques and other shows of Turkestan architecture.

Khiva has quietly dropped out of European interest; and the Russians, after burdening the country with a heavy war indemnity, were content to overawe it by two border fortresses, leaving to its native rulers a watched independence, as in the neighbouring protectorate. But less than Bokhara has Khiva had hitherto a chance of recovering itself, since it stands out of the way, reached only by difficult caravan routes through the surrounding deserts, or by boat travel down the river, along which a railway is proposed as far as the Russian frontier town Petro-Alexandrovsk. To the west it is separated from the Caspian by the Ust-Urt plateau, and by a lower waste where the old bed of the Oxus has made deep furrows and tall lines of shell-encrusted cliff mark out former limits of that great inland sea. To the north the Amu-daria now reaches the Aral through farspread mouths, where

For many a league

The shorn and parcelled Oxus strains along  
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles.

It is the railway line that brings the tide of civilization to those morally-withered lands; and to that main current of traffic let us return.

## RUSSIAN TURKESTAN

This region also was turned by the Bolsheviks into an inferno of murder, robbery, and starvation; and though the more orderly inhabitants are said to have overcome a state of practical anarchy, political organization has been so dislocated that for the present one must outline the Russian colonies as they were under the Czar.

Northwards from Bokhara, having crossed this khanate, the Trans-Caspian Railway soon enters the new provinces, by whose rapid conquest the "White Czar" turned the tables on memories of Attila and Genghiz Khan. The first of these is the

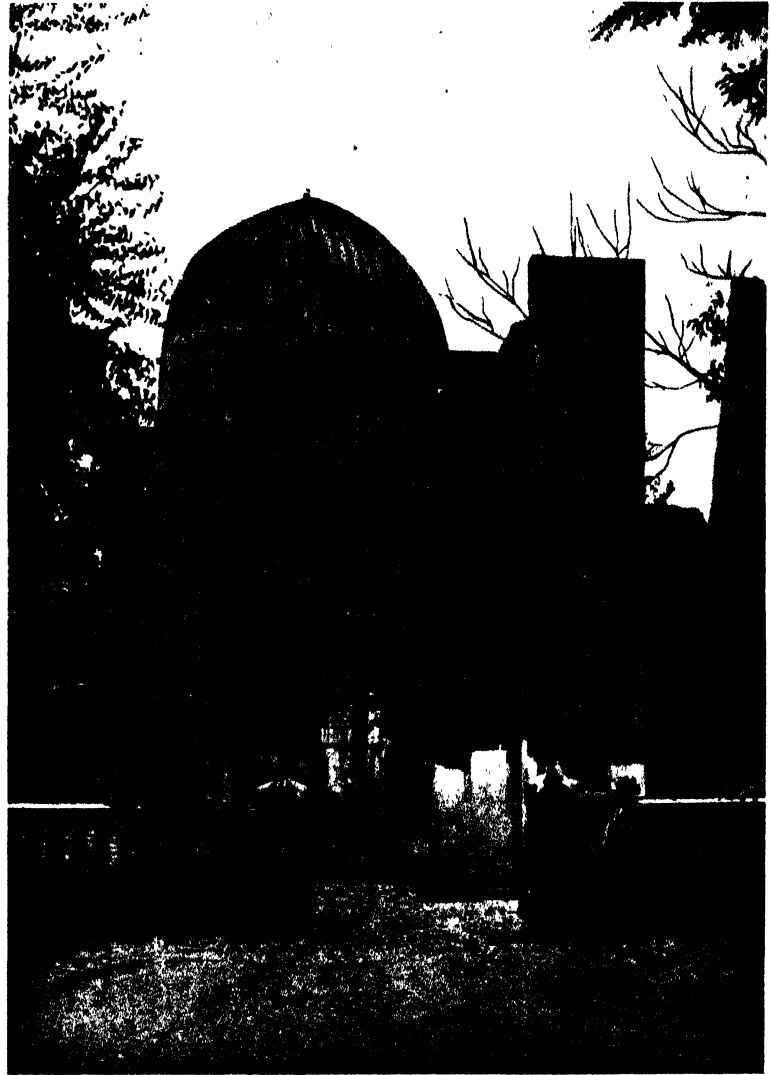
Zarafshan or Samarkand country, which the Russians cut off from the dominions of the emir, giving him back in exchange two small revolted districts which they had easily subdued. The Russian province, watered throughout its whole length by a thousand irrigating canals from the Zarafshan, has an area about equal to that of Greece, and a population of only a few hundred thousand; but the extraordinarily fertile soil, sometimes bearing three crops in the year, promises a quick increase. Under its new masters this land had a chance to regain its former greatness, when Samarkand, a city

then second only to Peking in old Asia, was the capital of that renowned Tamerlane or Timour the Tartar, buried in his dilapidated mausoleum, whose blue dome rises between the old and new towns into which the place is divided, as at Merv and Bokhara.

Old Samarkand contains many other impressive structures, much shaken by earthquakes, which appear to have thrown its minarets out of the perpendicular, though here is repeated the controversy of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, as to whether this were not the design of the construction. Through the dark, crowded streets, encircled by blooming gardens, the Russians have cleared broad approaches converging upon the central Righistan, or market-place, which, with the monumental religious edifices enclosing it, Lord Curzon pronounced the noblest square in the world.

"I know of nothing in the East approaching it in massive simplicity and grandeur; and nothing in Europe—save, perhaps, on a humbler scale, the Piazza di San Marco at Venice—which can even aspire to enter the competition. No European spectacle indeed can adequately be compared with it, in our inability to point to an open space in any Western city that is

VOL. VI



The Tomb of Timour, Samarkand

Samarkand was the capital of the renowned Timour the Lame (Tamerlane), and there lie the mortal remains of the great Oriental conqueror. The building shows the ravages of time and of earthquakes, but the interior is still beautiful with turquoise arabesques and inscriptions in gold.

commanded on three of its four sides by Gothic cathedrals of the finest order. For it is clear that the *medresse* of Central Asian Mahometanism is both in its architectural scope and design a lineal counterpart and forerunner of the minster of the West. Instead of the intricate sculpture and tracery crowning the pointed archways of the Gothic front, we see the ena-

melled tiles of Persia, framing a portal of stupendous magnitude. For the flanking minster towers or spires are substituted two soaring minarets. The central lantern of the West is anticipated by the Saracenic dome, and in lieu of artificial colour, thrown through tinted panes, from the open heavens shine down the azure of the Eastern sky and the glory of the Eastern sun. What Samarkand must have been in its prime, when these great fabrics emerged from the mason's hands, intact, and glittering with all the effulgence of the rainbow, their chambers crowded with students, their sanctuaries thronged by pilgrims, and their corporations endowed by kings, the imagination can still make some endeavour to depict."

One mosque, built by Timour, was the finest such fane in Central Asia; and there are three great *medresses*, once beautified by glazed brick, which makes the favourite ornamentation, turquoise blue being the prevailing colour. Here, as in Bokhara, many schools are still kept up for Mohammedan teaching. Samarkand also has a dominating palace-citadel, two miles in circumference, which, like the Residency of Lucknow, was scene of a doughty defence by the Russians in their war of conquest. Outside of the town is shown a tomb called Daniel's, a surprising sight to Protestants who may have fancied they had a monopoly of scriptural personages. Many such shrines, falling into ruins, form a setting for the Russian town that is growing up in the shade of park-like trees, so as to appear "a bouquet fallen on a green carpet", as it struck a Western traveller. Standing higher, and traversed by channels of running water, this has a better name for salubrity than other oasis cities. The population is stated at nearly 100,000, a figure likely to increase if Samarkand goes on flourishing at the expense of Bokhara, hitherto its commercial superior.

The country around, in its varied aspects, illustrates the Oriental hyperbole describing these oasis homes as "jewels set in sand". The strong contrast between the desert and its islands of verdure has cast over Eastern eyes such a glamour as readily enchanted any garden-set town into a paradise, a charm explained by one of M. Bonvalot's experi-

ences. "Reaching a height, we perceive the green bar of the oasis, from which issues the river twisting like a thin white streamer, then loses itself in the greyish steppe that stretches without bound. One might believe one's self on the edge of the sea. An optical delusion, produced by the setting sun, transforms the entire oasis into a single city covered with noble buildings; the poplars seem lofty minarets, the clumps of shrubbery cupolas of mosques, and the meanest building becomes a palace." Here, we may remember, was the scene of the Arabian Nights' story-telling; and among the crops that flourish in the oases is the sesame of Ali Baba's experience, much used for the production of oil, extracted also from cotton-seed, linseed, and others.

The railway goes on eastward into the valley of the Sir-daria, where it forks, the left-hand branch leading north across the river to Tashkend, chief town of the Sir-daria, the largest province of Russian Turkestan. Though this, as it stretches westward to the Sea of Aral, includes a large proportion of desert and "hungry steppe", it has much rich loess soil, needing only irrigation from the river and its tributaries to bloom with crops and fruit, and to support great herds of stock, as it did for Greek colonies of old. During the last thirty years Russian towns and villages have been quickly springing up to take the place of half-ruined fortresses and bazaars, the dwindling remains of past greatness; and now that the railway opens markets for its produce, Sir-daria may be expected to increase by leaps and bounds, unless the Russian colonists let themselves degenerate to the native level. Another benefit bestowed by the conquerors was the planting of trees so as already to affect the dry climate. The rainfall at Tashkend is said to have doubled since the growing up of the fine avenues that adorn its streets.

Tashkend stands on a tributary of the main river, flowing down from the mountains that cover the south-east corner of the province. This has long been a junction-point of caravans between Europe and Southern Asia, and, with a population grow-

## Russian Turkestan



Roofed in from the Sun: a bazaar in Old Tashkend

ing on to 300,000, a considerable proportion of them Russians, it became the most thriving city in Central Asia, seat of the Turkestan general government. Old Tashkend lies in ruins 15 miles to the south; the city that has taken over its name is itself, however, one of some antiquity. Like others of the region, it is mainly built of small flat-roofed mud houses, frequent earthquakes being unfavourable to more ambitious architecture; but these are so set in roomy gardens, avenues, and water conduits that the place covers as much space as a European city of ten times its population. The Russian quarter, only a generation old as it is, shows regular streets radiating from an open square enclosed by European houses, shops, and public buildings, so as to make on Dr. Schuyler the impression of a brand-new American city, but for the absence of bustle. There is a museum, in which the Russians formed an

interesting collection of archaeological relics gathered from a land that has known many masters both before and since it fell under the sway of Alexander the Great. It still shows traces of the Nestorian Christianity rooted out here by conquering Islam.

We shall return presently to the eastern fork of the main line, whose other arm turns northward to Tashkend, thence carried on to the European frontier at Orenburg, down the Sir-daria for the first part of its route. On the north-east side its valley is separated from the Steppes by a mountain range, over which the post road by Chimkent and the old city of Auleata led the way for a branch line begun to Vernoye and Semiretchinsk, "Land of Seven Rivers", that, though reckoned among the Steppe provinces, has naturally, so far as its mountain valleys and oases are concerned, the same fertile character as Turkestan. From Vernoye, a town much troubled by earthquakes, lying

between Lakes Balkash and Issyk-kul, this line should be extended perhaps to Kuldja in Chinese Turkestan, before turning north by Semipalatinsk and the Irtysh valley to join the Trans-Siberian road at Omsk, and make another connection with the Trans-Caspian region. Thinly populated as yet, all this region, like the bordering province of Sir-daria, begins to be lined with roads and dotted with thriving Russian settlements, that, while here and there breaking up the steppes for cultivation, add the pig to the live stock of native herdsmen.

On the western side the Sir-daria is closely edged by a great "Red Desert" stretching away to the Amu-daria, where the greedy sands have swallowed up once flourishing towns and fields. Along the railway line spring up new towns, a generation back known only as Fort I, Fort II, and so forth, as stations on a troubled route to the Aral Sea. The most important place as yet seems the re-grown old city of Turkestan, which has one remarkable monument in a mosque built by Timour, and now becomes an active centre of trade. Farther on comes Kasalinsk, where the railway leaves the river, a little way above its mouth in the Aral.<sup>1</sup> After a semicircular course over the steppes northward from the Caspian, this line joins the European Russian rails at Orenburg, from which another route has been proposed to run along the northern Steppe provinces, probably converging with the Trans-Siberian through one of its southern branches.

From this north-western corner we turn back to the south-east, where the waters of the upper Sir-daria and its tributary the Naryn make Ferghana the most thriving province of Turkestan, specially noted for the growth of cotton, which has prospered amain since the coarser native variety

largely gave place to transplantation of long-stapled cotton from America. Nearly half the cotton that feeds Russia's chief textile industry comes from Turkestan, and mostly from Ferghana, where its cultivation, ousting that of foodstuffs, has raised their price in a country thus made more dependent on imports: Russia has to supply grain in exchange for cotton. Silk is another product, along with good crops of grain and fruit from irrigated fields, bordered by hedges of poplar and willow. Some parts are watered only too well, for the Sir-daria, here pent up in a narrower channel, is apt to brim over when flooded by melting snow, and to form unwholesome morasses. The climate of this valley is reported more equable than on less sheltered plains, with milder winters, yet its cultivators have, like our own, to fear late frosts. The upper slopes afford rich pastures and forests. The mountains are believed to be stored with minerals. Petroleum and coal have been found, which if sooner available might have saved too reckless diswooding of hills once attracting a more diffused rainfall. On the other hand, here as elsewhere, Russian engineers help native ingenuity in husbanding and directing the streams to turn patches of desert into fresh meadows and gardens. Amid its more prosaic product of cotton, Ferghana is renowned for apricots, melons, nuts in variety, and grapes, of which its new masters do not scruple to make wine, as did its Moslem inhabitants.

This hopeful possession, quieted by Russian conquest, 1875, after devastating internal feuds, is the Ex-Khanate of Khokand, a valley as large as Portugal, shut in on all sides but the west by wild spurs of the great Tian-Shan mass of mountains, widely spread over both Russian and Chinese Turkestan. Through it runs the eastern

<sup>1</sup> The Orenburg-Tashkend line is, or lately was, not open to private travellers. In speaking of the branches marked out in this region, it has seemed best to use a potential mood of statement. The need of them being a military as well as a commercial consideration, their progress is not always advertised. The heavy burdens laid on Russia by recent events must cause delay in carrying out plans which are here indicated as in view, while they may also have become accomplished before these lines

are in print. Even among its losses and distractions, the Czar's Government worked at extending and improving these hastily-laid lines, their construction often scamped by carelessness or dishonesty, their maintenance like to be costly upon shifting sands or snow-clad wastes, where the very rails have sometimes been warped by severe frost. Little advance can be looked for amid revolutionary tumults under authorities more active in destruction than construction.

branch of the Trans-Caspian line, reaching first the old city of Khojend, long disputed between the native rulers of Bokhara and Khokand, and now included in the Russian Samarkand province, though geographically it belongs to Ferghana. The railway next reaches Khokand, the former capital and still, with over 100,000 people, the largest place of Ferghana. Being of comparatively modern date it appears better built than older cities, and Dr. Lansdell pronounces the ex-khan's palace citadel one of the finest such structures he saw in Central Asia. Its great bazaar is noted for brass and other smithwork, as also for furs brought down by the hill-men, while its bourse is the pulse of the local cotton trade. But the conquerors found it an insanitary place, infected by fever and goitre, so the official capital was moved farther up the valley to New Marguilan, rechristened Skobelev, after the famous Russian general who was the first governor. As yet a small place, spreading among nurseries of fruit, this

has been built, some miles away from Old Marguilan, on the southern fork of the railway that at Khokand threw out a left-hand branch to Namangan, a rising town about which the best cotton is grown. Beyond Skobelev the line had its terminus at Andijan, in 1902 ruined by an earthquake, but since rebuilt to vie with Namangan as second town of the province in size, their populations not far short of 80,000. Sooner or later the railway is to be pushed on eastwards towards the romantic gorges through which the Sir-daria comes down into the head of the valley. Probably its next goal will be the old city of Osh, where rises a sacred hill crowned by a monument which legend makes the tomb of Solomon. Hence more or less traversable roads run loftily on, eastward to Russian posts on the border of Chinese Turkestan, and southward to the bleak uplands of the Pamirs, beyond the Alai range at the foot of which Osh ends a stretch of valley and plain reaching nearly 1000 miles from the Caspian.

## THE PAMIRS

"The Roof of the World", as it is called with awe by the surrounding natives, used to be geographically styled the Pamir, a word meaning an upland plain. Recent explorations, however, have shown that this region consists rather of a succession of such plains, at a mean height of 12,000 feet or more, enclosed and intersected by mountains often twice as high, the whole extent of some 30,000 square miles forming a western continuation of the Tibetan tablelands. The Great Pamir, the Little Pamir, and other broad valleys are distinguished as walled off from each other. Sir Francis E. Younghusband explains the Pamirs as old glacier beds partly choked up by the detritus of the mountains, which their ill-fed streams have not force enough to carry onwards. Hot springs here and there burst out under the shadow of the glaciers still formed in the higher valleys of this cold and dry mass of land, their melting dis-

charged chiefly into the Amu-daria, in torrents poured down through gorges and ravines by which the western side is more broken than the higher eastern edge.

Politically, the Pamirs, meeting-place of three empires, as also of Afghanistan, have been looked upon as a "No Man's Land", though the Chinese once made claims to sovereignty here, and of late the Russians showed a disposition to treat the country as a preserve of their own. A Boundary Commission, called for by chronic disputes, gave the greater part of the ground to Russia, leaving a southern trough, the "Little Pamir", as neutral zone between this power and the truculent hill-tribes who dwell about our Indian frontier.

Unless to mask advances upon neighbouring territory, the Pamirs are of little value to any power. On vast stretches here, as in the neighbouring Altai Mountains, appear no signs of life. The only inhabi-



## The World of To-day



Brig.-Gen. Sir Percy Sykes  
A Proud Trophy for the Sportsman: an *Ovis poli*  
shot in the Asian Highlands

tants, beyond Russian military posts, are scattered Kirghiz herdsmen, who in summer find pasturage on the less barren parts of these treeless and townless plains. They have seldom been visited by Europeans unless for exploration or in search of their great game, the *ovis poli*, a wild sheep as large as a donkey, with magnificent curled horns that make a proud trophy for the sportsman. The climate is, of course, very severe, fifty degrees of frost being common in winter; and though the lowest levels almost equal the height of the Alps, the scenery to a great extent wants striking features, the bare, bleak valleys being enclosed often by monotonously rounded hills.

Some grand prospects, indeed, open up around lakes here and there filling the hollows, the largest of them Kara-kul, "the black lake", which has no outlet. The Little Kara-kul, on the eastern edge, is a beautiful sheet of clear blue water, from whose shores two magnificent mountain peaks rise over 25,000 feet, Mustagh-ata, "Father of ice", believed to be the highest point, and that other discovered and named Mount Dufferin by Mr. Ney Elias. Another notable spot is the Rang-kul, or Dragon Lake, where a cave has long made a sacred wonder for the Buddhist world, lit as it is by a mysterious gleam believed to shine from a diamond in the head of a mighty dragon that guards the treasures buried within; but Sir F. Younghusband dissipated this myth by climbing into the hollow and finding the light to be a natural reflection through an opening covered with some white deposit. The same traveller, in whose *Heart of Asia* we have one of the best accounts of the Pamirs, presents us with one far-reaching view from their south side, where the Hindoo-Koosh passes lead down to the broken outskirts of British India.

"We saw before us an amphitheatre of snowy peaks glittering in the fading sunlight, and at their foot one vast snow-field, the depository of all their surplus snow and ice, and the first beginning of the great glacier which would bear the burden down the valley from it. This nook of mountains was the very Heart of Central Asia. One side of the amphitheatre was formed by the range of mountains which divides the waters of the Oxus, which flow to Turkestan, from the waters of the Indus, which make their way to India. Here was also the meeting-point of the watershed which divides the rivers flowing eastward into Chinese Turkestan, from those flowing westward to Russian and Afghan Turkestan, with that other watershed which separates the rivers of India on the south from the rivers of Central Asia on the north. At the very point at which we stood those two great watersheds of Asia met; they formed the glittering amphitheatre of snowy peaks which we saw before us, and it was from the snow-fields at the base of these that issued the parent glacier of the mighty Oxus."

## TRANSCAUCASIA

- From the Pamirs, we might descend within the wide bounds of China, or southward to the great dependency of that other empire upon which "the sun never sets"; but, to have done with Asian Russia, we must pass across the Caspian Sea to where modern Europe has been pushing over a frontier of ancient renown for sternly impressive scenery as for a measure of early civilization that has left its traces in now decayed cities, strongholds and lonely churches among mountain wilds. Caucasia is the broad isthmus joining the two continents, at one time separated by a strait which, north of the Caucasus range, connected the Sea of Azov with the Caspian, and is now represented by a chain of dried-up lake and river-beds. As in the case of the Siberian frontier, the Russian Government ignored continental divisions, for its Caucasian province includes a stretch both of Europe and Asia. Transcaucasia forms the southern half lying beyond the mountains, across which Russia began to press more than a century ago, making a difficult conquest of warlike mountain tribes, overrunning the kingdom of Georgia, encroaching upon Persia and Armenia, then, after the war of 1877, taking in a large slice of Turkish territory that brought the Czar's dominion over the whole isthmus. The Ciscaucasian or European half of this province is about equal in size to Transcaucasia, each roughly 90,000 square miles; while the latter, with a warmer climate and richer vegetation, is the more thickly inhabited by a population estimated at some six millions.
- To the south comes a wider but less regular and imposing mountain group known as the Little Caucasus, or the Anti-Caucasus, which is not so much a chain as a mass of rounded swellings on the edge of the great Iranian plateau extending into Armenia. The two systems are connected by a transverse ridge, called the Meshek, which separates the ancient Colchis, the basin of the Rion flowing to the Black Sea, from that of the Kur (*Cyrus*), with its tributary the *Aras* (*Araxes*), draining a larger hollow on the Caspian side. This Meshek ridge makes a dividing line of climate, the western basin being moister and milder, while the eastern has the dryness and extremes of heat and cold that are the rule in Central Asia. A similar variation has been noticed on the sides of the Anti-Caucasus: the valleys opening northward to the great river basins may be luxuriant, while those on the south are either parched or in the rainy season turned to unwholesome swamps, yet exceptional oases flourish where the rainfall is husbanded for careful distribution.
- In the account of Russia has already been shown by what an extraordinary *macédoine* of stocks and faiths this region is inhabited on both sides of the range. To the south the greatest name is that of Georgia, with its noted Caucasian people and its old memories of Christian sovereigns, their greatness perhaps looming large through a mist of legend like the hundred castles of its Queen Tamara. This country, like its Circassian neighbour, has been celebrated for a doll-like female beauty that recruited Turkish harems; and it is said that, when the Russians interfered with the sale of girls to Constantinople, these "victims" were indignant at the closing of their welcome prospect. The Georgians, every



A Georgian Peasant

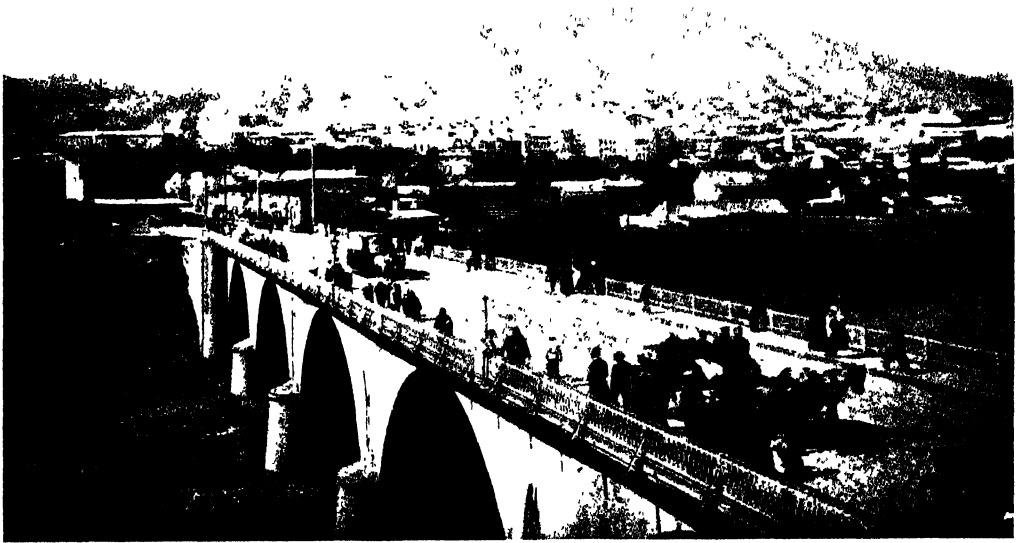
second man of whom is said to claim the title prince, are a sentimental, swaggering folk, who cherish their romantic traditions, and delight in wearing gay flowing garments and richly-ornamented weapons, a striking feature of native costume being a row of cartridge-cases sewn on to the breast of their tunics. This is worn even by little boys, whose fathers strut bristling in silver-mounted arms; and in the wilder mountain glens men may be seen arrayed in suits of chain-armor, with round bucklers, such as have served them against ruder weapons than the guns now in every Georgian's hand. The long embroidered open-breasted coat of the Circassians has, like the Highland kilt in Scotland, become a sort of national costume, adopted by Russian residents. Among the Asiatics, the most thriving both in business and agriculture have been the Armenians; but Tartars are more numerous

to the number of some two millions, chiefly inhabiting the eastern side of the ex-province. Travellers have noted that the neatest and most prosperous-looking villages here turn out to belong to Russian or German dissenters, who have crossed the Caucasus to seek such freedom of worship as our Pilgrim Fathers found beyond the Atlantic. Other Russian inhabitants, except in large towns, have been chiefly soldiers and officials, little more ready to make their permanent home here than we in India; so that the Transcaucasian side of the isthmus is still very Asian in its civilization; and as yet the main benefit of European rule, has been greater security for life and property under which industrial development has grown up somewhat slowly; but its mountain recesses could not yet be called safe for strangers.

Lord Bryce well compares Russian civilization to a coat of paint over unseasoned wood. The Czar's Government had its hands too full with the task of subjugation to do much for the development of this province, which it was even accused of checking by a short-sighted commercial policy. Yet the country is rich in natural resources, in soil for fruit and corn, in forests along the foot of the Caucasus and on the western side of the cross range, if on its eastern plains rather in steppe pastures for the herds of nomad Kurds and Tartars. Wine, oil, and silk are produced, and Chinese coolies have been introduced for an experiment in cultivating tea, a native shrub here, hitherto imported as the popular beverage of Russian lands. Cotton and tobacco can be grown with success. Though here was the fabulous home of the Golden Fleece, precious metals have not been much manifest in modern times; but the hardly explored wilds of these great mountains are known to conceal iron, copper, coal, sulphur, if not other minerals; and at each end of the chain is a notable source of wealth in the petroleum that takes the place of coal, driving Russian engines into the centre of Asia. Rock-salt is another prosaic treasure. The fisheries of the Caspian are very productive. There are good breeds of cattle,

horses, asses, mules, goats, and big-tailed sheep, as well as game in abundance, such as great-antlered deer. In the mountain glens are not yet exterminated panthers, lynxes, shy leopards, wolves, bears, great bulls or bisons, and other fierce animals; the shy chamois herds on the icy heights along with the horned ibex; wild hogs lurk in the river-bed jungles; and in the hills

very centre of the chain, not yet threaded by a railway, but by a road of more than 100 miles, from Vladikavkaz, the chief place of Ciscaucasia, to Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, and seat of Russia's Transcaucasian administration. There must be a great variety among its population of over 300,000, since we learn that newspapers are printed here in Russian, Georgian, Armenian, and



Ermakow, Tiflis

A General View of Tiflis, the Capital of Georgia

In the foreground is the Nikolai Bridge, one of the four which span the Kura River

about Lenkoran, on the Caspian shore, the tiger may still be killed so near the borders of Europe. A bear has been observed fishing with his paws in trout streams undreamt of by Izaak Walton. One native of the Caucasus which has become very familiar to us is the pheasant, a name derived from the Phasis River, as *cherry* comes from Cerasus on the adjacent Black Sea coast, and *peach* is derived from Persia.

The main passage here from Europe into Asia goes through the Dariel Gorge, in the

Persian; and in its bazaars may be seen a lively swarm of Turks, Tartars, Turkomans, Greeks, Albanians, Jews, Arabs, Negroes, and Parsees, mingled among the country-folk in their gay dress. The city's own reputation for picturesqueness has by some visitors been judged an exaggeration; but it certainly occupies a fine situation on broken ground at the foot of snow-topped mountains, on which it has a cool hill-station some dozen miles away. As in most Eastern cities dominated by Europeans,

## The World of To-day

there is a great contrast between the old quarter of dirty crooked lanes winding among poor buildings of stone or mud, and the modern part with its broad boulevards, open squares, large public buildings, tramways, cafés, and notably the barracks of the Russian army that had its head-quarters at Tiflis; then a suburb across the river is mainly inhabited by the descendants of Suabian emigrants settled here a century ago. A fine prospect of the city is commanded from the ruined castle on a bold height, beneath which has been laid out a botanical garden. Other lions are the ancient Byzantine cathedral; a new Greek cathedral, the most striking structure of the place; the gorgeously decorated palace of the viceroy; the remarkable museum, with its local collections; and the "temple of fame" preserving trophies and memorials of Russia's valour in a difficult conquest. This is a place of considerable trade, with manufactures of cotton, silk, leather, weapons, silver ware, &c. As a token, perhaps, of European influence, Mr. Freshfield observed that the shopkeepers in the bazaar showed some eagerness to attract customers, unlike the air of dignified and sleepy indifference usual with Oriental merchants. Among the city's attractions are hot sulphur baths, which may some day make it a European resort. Already, indeed, it has attracted a sprinkling of tourists, able to take a peep into Asia without much hardship, as Tiflis stands on the railway traversing this province from the Black Sea to the Caspian.

Over a monotonous plain of steppes and marshes, "waves of drab and dirty-green land", dotted with Tartar encampments and herds of camels, the stations far out of sight of the towns or villages they serve, the line passes eastward down the valley of the Kur to Baku, chief Russian port on the Caspian, reached also by rail along the coast from the Ciscaucasian province. Here an ancient citadel was the core of a once Persian town, flourishing on the Caspian fisheries, on a trade in silk and saffron produced in the vicinity, but above all on the inexhaustible sources of petroleum that made

the vicinity sacred ground for those old fire-worshippers whose descendants still come on pilgrimage to their "temple of eternal fire" on the promontory of Apcheron running out into the Caspian beyond Baku. A destructive earthquake and eruption of lava have given more violent hint of the volcanic energy pent up below. There are hundreds of wells hereabouts, spouting up into wooden towers, from which columns of black naphtha now burst forth into lakes, and now blaze out in stupendous conflagration. A large group of them comes two or three miles from the town, which even at this distance is impregnated with the smell and taste of petroleum, as the sea is fouled by greasy scum sometimes kindling upon its surface for miles; and over the whole neighbourhood hang the fumes of the "Black Town", where, some miles from the new quarter, the refineries vomit out thick smoke and lurid glow that suggest Tartarus, breaking up from the dreary, arid desert on which Baku had gathered over 150,000 people when it was half ruined by Tartar outbreaks against the Armenian element; but seems since regrown to be almost as large as Tiflis. The morals and manners of its cosmopolitan inhabitants were all along questionable—drunkenness, debauchery, and murder being said to be their chief recreation after the exciting chance of striking a rich gush of oil. The wells have been mainly in the hands of foreign syndicates and Armenians, who found themselves so much hampered by Russian officialdom, as well as by their turbulent workmen, that they could ill compete with the American supply, while the high excise made oil almost as dear at Baku as in London. In the interest of its single-line railway, which had little business to do beyond conveying petroleum to Batoum, the Government long opposed an urgent demand, at last granted, for a pipe by which the oil might flow across for shipment on the shores of the Black Sea.

The westward section of the line, from Tiflis to the Black Sea, passes through more picturesque scenery of mountain gorges and tangled woods, crossing the transverse ridge



Baku: the approach to the main quay

among romantic river-courses overhung by stern precipices and ruined robber castles such as fit our idea of the wild Caucasus. Borjom on these hills was the Simla of the province, as summer residence of the governor and a frequented spa of ferruginous waters. The Rion is the main stream followed, that ancient Phasis that was the goal of the Argonauts. Where it emerges from the hills on to the plain stands Kutais, the chief town of Mingrelia, a prettily-situated place, chiefly of recent building. The older Zougdidi was seat of the Mingrelian princes, whose last heiress married Prince Achille Murat, a happier union than Jason's with Medea. At the mouth of the river an almost tropical luxuriance of vegetation degenerates into a great swamp, compared by more than one writer to the "Eden" where even Mark Tapley's jollity wilted. This extends 25 miles inland from

Poti, the original terminus of the railway, rising to fresh prosperity through an improved harbour, after it had seemed supplanted by Batoum, 30 miles south, under the mountains of Lazistan, to which the line throws out a fork. Since Batoum came into the hands of Russia as spoil of her last war with Turkey, it had quickly grown into a smart modern town, strongly fortified, its harbour flourishing chiefly on shipment of the petroleum brought across from the Caspian, which fills the place with unpleasant odour, especially when the wind is blowing from its great oil tanks. At this end of the province, also, as in other parts of the Caucasus, oil-fields have been tapped. Near Batoum comes the mouth of the Choruk Su, a considerable river flowing from the Turkish province Lazistan. North of Poti the Ingur rushes down through grand Caucasian gorges, like those by which the

Kuban and the Terek, rising on the south side of the range, cut their course into Ciscaucasia.

Along with an eastern strip of the Black Sea coast, Russia acquired a mountain country inland, the south-western corner of the isthmus, in which is Kars, an old fortress that during the Crimean War was gallantly defended for the Turks by a small English garrison, but fell before the Russian arms in 1877. North-east of Kars, on the former frontier, are the important Russian fortifications of Alexandropol; and still farther east, among gloomy volcanic mountains, lies Lake Gokcha, one of the great basins of this region, which differs from others in being fresh water full of salmon, discharging into the Aras or Araxes, flowing through the south of the Russian domain that on the east side was won from Persia. From Tiflis a railway runs south by Alexandropol to Kars, and beyond. Farther east, on the table-land between Lake Gokcha and the valley of the Aras, a line reaches Erivan, capital of Russian Armenia, which claims to have been founded by Noah on his descent from the Ark, and is to-day a place of some 12,000 to 20,000 people, described as a thoroughly Eastern town of Persian type, "with just a little Russian varnish in one or two of its streets". It has a citadel picturesquely placed above the gorge of the Zanga, and enclosing a former Persian palace, among the barracks of the garrison; there are also a fine mosque, a cannon-foundry, and spacious caravanserais

on the outskirts, for here passes the main road from Tabriz to Europe; and the streets are lively with travellers and traders of many neighbouring races. The Araxes valley, in which the Armenians place the Garden of Eden, made an historic highway for ancient conquerors penetrating into Asia; and by it the railway is now continued from Erivan to the ferry by which the road at present crosses the frontier at Julfa, whose name and population have been bodily transferred to the large Armenian suburb of Ispahan.

To the south of Erivan, across the Aras, Mt. Ararat overlooks the meeting place of Russian, Persian, and Turkish territory. This imposing mass consists of two peaks, connected by a ridge, the dome-like Great Ararat (16,900 feet) and the cone of the Little Ararat (12,840 feet), both of which, crowned with snow and cloud, riven by chasms and fissures, hoary from volcanic convulsions, rise among the surrounding heights with such isolated grandeur that this dominating mass is sacred and awful in the eyes of all the varying believers about its base.<sup>1</sup> Ararat has seemed, as in a sense it is, the central boss of the world. Long was it a matter of faith in all Christian lands that Noah's Ark remained stranded on its mysterious top, as Armenians still believe, and pronounce Ararat to be inaccessible, though during the nineteenth century it was several times successfully ascended, notably by Lord Bryce, for whom, as he stood alone on the hard-won summit, the mists for an

<sup>1</sup> "The noble thing about Ararat is not the parts, but the whole. I know nothing so sublime as the general aspect of this huge yet graceful mass seen from the surrounding plains; no view which fills the beholder with a profounder sense of grandeur and space than that which is unfolded when, on climbing its lofty side, he sees the far-stretching slopes beneath, and the boundless waste of mountains beyond spread out under his eye. The very simplicity, or even monotony, of both form and colour increases its majesty. One's eye is not diverted by a variety of points of interest: all the lines lead straight up to the towering, snowy summit; which is steep enough on the upper part to be beautiful, while its broad-spread base and rocky buttresses give it a sort of stately solidity. The colour is as simple as the form. From a gently-inclined pedestal of generally whitish hue, formed, as has been said, of volcanic sand and ashes, the

steep slopes rise in a belt of green 5000 feet wide, above this is another zone of black volcanic rock, streaked with snow beds; highest of all, the cap of dazzling silver. At one glance the eye takes in all these zones of climate and vegetation from the sweltering plain to the icy pinnacle, ranging through more than 14,000 feet of vertical height. There can be but few other places in the world where so lofty a peak (17,000 feet) soars so suddenly from a plain so low, 2000 to 3000 feet above the sea, and consequently few views equally grand."—Lord Bryce's *Transcaucasia and Ararat*.

Another well-known mountaineer, Mr. Douglas Freshfield, found comic aspects in the rocks that, on nearer acquaintance, go far to justify the local belief that the summit is inaccessible—"disconnected crags of lava, suggesting by their fantastic shapes that half the animals, after leaving the Ark had been petrified as they came down the mountain".



Great Ararat and Little Ararat

The higher peak is nearly 17,000 feet, and the lower about 4000 feet less. There are few other places in the world where such lofty peaks soar so suddenly from a plain so low (2000-3000 feet above sea-level).

instant rolled away, disclosing a view "immeasurably extensive and grand" over Armenia, that much-troubled land, which we must survey apart, without regard to political boundaries, at present unsettled. The Transcaucasian province included its northern side as Russian Armenia.

Like other Russian dependencies, all this region was infected with the disorder of the Revolution, taken advantage of by patriotism fretting under a foreign yoke. Already, in the troubles of 1905, it had been distracted by riots and insurrectionary movements that left some parts a prey to brigandage when order had been restored in and about the cities. After the fall of the Czar's Government the province made an attempt at sticking together as an independent state, but soon split up into three would-be republics—Georgia, with Tiflis as its centre,

Armenia about Erivan, and the eastern quarter, which, mainly inhabited by Tartars, was so hard up for a name that it took that of the adjacent Persian province, Azerbaijan. From this last, its only great town, Baku, showed more than once a disposition to split away, the industrial population of this corner having little in common with the ignorant Tartars, who let the railway through their territory lie unworked for months, to show how fit they were for prosperous self-government. There was also a so-called republic of predatory highland tribes at the east end of the Caucasus, where Denikin vainly sought to base his attack on the Moscow tyranny. German intrigues helped to make the confusion worse confounded, and Turkish forces came pressing in where the Allies, tired of war and perhaps puzzled among the welter of



interests, made no steady push for predominance.

The port and district of Batoum continued to be held by a British force to safeguard its trade; but we evacuated it in 1920, and next year it was seized by the Kemalists Turks. On the other side, also, where the Tartar Government seemed more willing to welcome British than Russian interference, but at one time let itself be overrun by Turkish troops and treated to a renewed massacre of Armenians, we made some irresolute efforts that ended in retirement. These raw republics showed a tendency to add to their number; and before long they were not only at loggerheads with each other, but found themselves overwhelmed by Russian Bolsheviks, under whose domineering most of the country "went red", its native princes and khans losing control of the masses leavened by the revolutionary fermentation that stirred up their hereditary hatreds. Baku's rich stores of oil made it a prize for the Soviet partisans, who thence invaded Persia, and talked loudly of spreading their propaganda into Afghanistan and India, a design in which they seemed likely to be helped by the inaction of our Government, hampered as it was by the ignorant factiousness of

working-class voters, gulled into a certain sympathetic belief in the blood-stained Utopia proclaimed from Moscow. Baku being abandoned by all but a feeble post of our forces, Bolshevik violence crushed the factions of Azerbaijan, and went on to interfere with the struggling freedom of Georgia and Armenia, which, with different degrees of acceptance, received the "red" gospel. In 1921 Georgia was attacked from every side, her own dissensions unnerving her for effectual resistance to Russian and Turkish forces, with which she had to fight a triangular duel like that recorded in *Midshipman Easy*. A much-oftener-told story, that of robbers falling out over their prey, seems likely to be illustrated in this region, where it is hard to say in what quarter may settle the political winds of Æolus let loose over lands strewn with wreck and given up to quarrelsome wreckers. In our last edition Transcaucasia was described as a Russian possession; but at present it seems here impossible to answer for either government or boundaries, the latter long in dispute with those of Turkish Asia Minor. This must be our apology for not surveying apart the three, perhaps ephemeral, republics entitled GEORGIA, AZERBAIJAN, and ARMENIA.



A Bridge on the Military Road, near Kars

# ASIA MINOR AND ITS BORDERLANDS

## TURKEY IN ASIA

For the most westerly corner of Asia, sometimes styled "The Nearer East", with its medley of races and overlapping divisions, it is difficult to find a title without doing violence to fact. The only unity the greater part of it had was in the yoke of Turkey, which here and there is now shaken off. On the north-east, Russia encroached both upon Persia and upon Turkey. Persia and Turkey were separated by a conventional frontier, along which subjects of the same blood owned different allegiance, where the Armenians and other Christian elements of population break up the dominant faith of Islam. The vast plain of Mesopotamia varies the general conformation of high table-land wrinkled and knobbed by mountains. The merging of one or other characteristic forces us to regard as a whole a region that has lately lost its political union; and this arrangement will prove satisfactory if we bear in mind that the classical Asia Minor was the western division, here defined as Anatolia, and that Turkey's Asian dominion did not in our time include the Caucasian isthmus connecting it with Russia. Of all this region we must speak mainly as it was before the Great European War that has ruined some parts of it, yet also may promise such a revival as will spring up over devastating lava streams.

The quarter of Asia unhappy enough to be ruled from Constantinople covered at least 500,000 square miles, and more if we took in the Porte's vaguer authority over

Arabia. Its population, including Arabs, is above 20,000,000—all statistics, here as in other backward countries, being to a great extent guesswork. This sparse inhabitation, usually a little thicker about the coasts, is made up by alien and often hostile stocks, themselves of mingled ancestry. The aboriginal peoples were permeated by streams of Greek, Roman, and even Gallic conquest; then the Oriental warriors, pushed out for a time by Europe, swept back to become in turn the uppermost stratum, compact not so much in blood as in faith, since many of the original inhabitants escaped the pressure of conquest by adopting their master's religion. On the east side will be found a sprinkling of Persians and Caucasians, with Tartar, Kurd, and Arab tribes, and the numerous Armenians who, as we go westward, are seen in the towns rather than in the fields. On the Mediterranean, Greeks, estimated at two or three millions in all, live most numerous, but are spread out over the land once colonized by their civilizing energy. In the south, Syrians and Chaldeans mingle with the Arabs, on the edge of their native deserts. Moslem Circassians, escaping the yoke of their Russian masters, have emigrated into Turkish domains as far south as Syria, while in return persecuted Armenians have sought refuge among their fellow-Christians across the ex-Russian frontier. Up to this frontier the majority of the inhabitants, or a full half, are the Turks, a name here marking religion

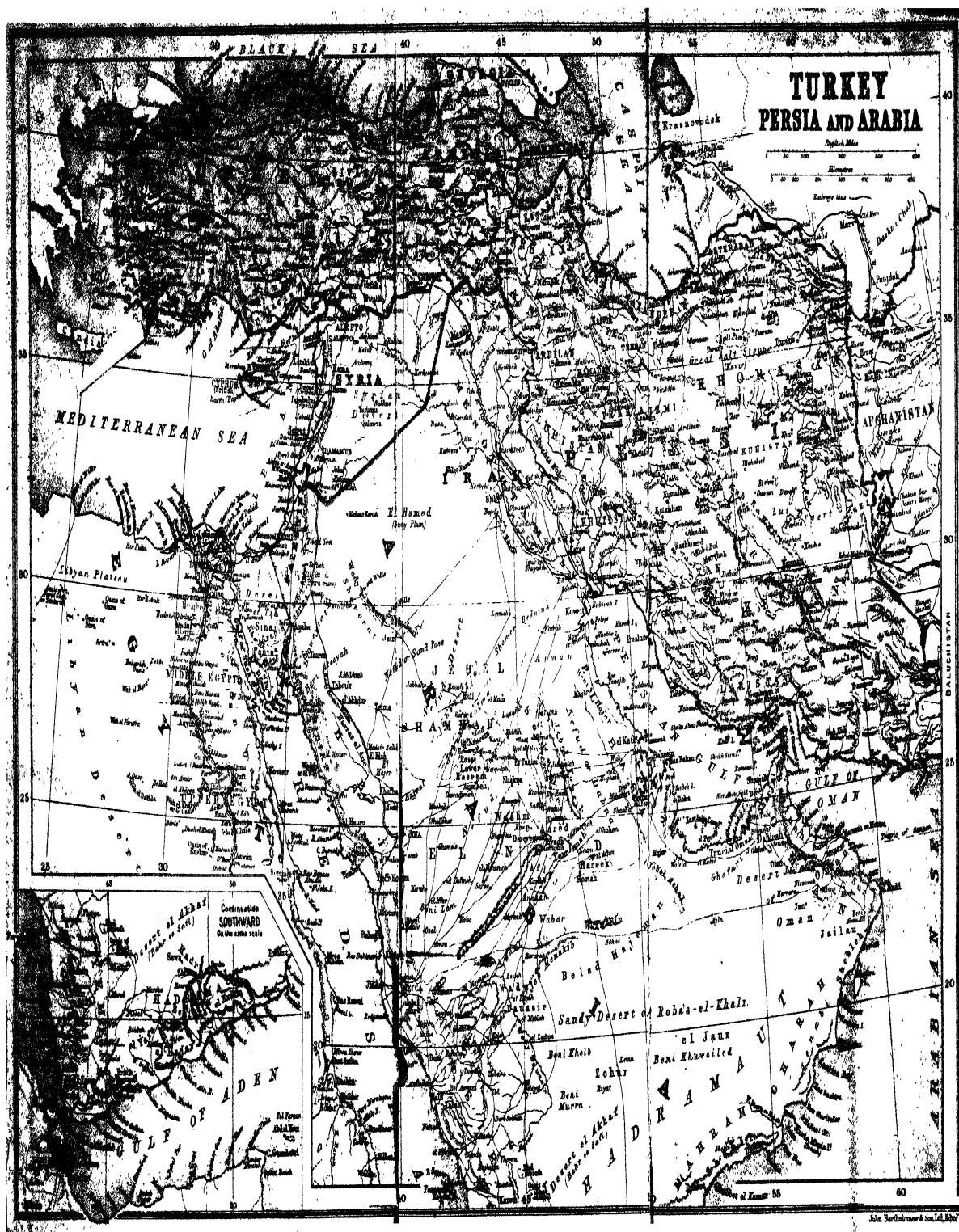
## The World of To-day

rather than blood, which, apart from miscegenation, is of two main strains, the Osmanlis that swarmed over the Bosphorus to be a peril then a nuisance to Europe, and wilder branches of the same stock, differentiated by ethnologists as Turkomans and Yuruks. Asia Minor still contains seminomad tribes of this race, little more civilized than their devastating ancestors, and sometimes hardly to be distinguished from the gipsy hordes common in the country, as Jewish communities are in the towns. In many parts are found neighbouring villages of mutually hostile faith and speaking different languages. There has been a certain shifting of population in our time, the Government, by spurts of energy, having moved on to vacant land bodies of immigrants, afterwards neglected and left to starve or scatter. The numbers of the whole mass tended to dwindle through sanitary and economical ignorance, while the more enterprising readily sought better fortune in other countries. The United States alone have lately received some half million of ex-Turkish subjects.

Over such a hodge-podge of humanity ruled the proud pig-headed Osmanli, who has some good qualities as a man, but very bad ones as a master. While his own religion was dominant, the number of his Christian vassals has forced upon him a nominal toleration which yet left the infidel in a position of galling inferiority both legal and social, with the one advantage of not being obliged to military service, the alternative being an extra tax. So close under the eye of Europe, Turkish Government lost some of its congenial cruelty; which, indeed, is not a private vice of the settled people, though the ill-paid bashi-bazouks and other irregular levies take too kindly to any chance of robbery and outrage. Such horrors as impalement have been shamed down; tortures, if still practised, were kept in the dark; and even the bastinado became in most parts an anachronism. But the authority of the Turk was still a rusty, clumsy engine, worked by extortion and dishonesty, and efficient mainly for evil. Often, observed Mr. William Warfield,

a recent American traveller, the Ottoman ruler "starts out well, on a sufficiently high aim, but the chances are that he will fall down when he comes to difficulties. Whether he tries to build a bridge or a road, carry out a political reform, or organize an army or navy, his end is always the same; a promising spurt terminates in lack of enthusiasm, any old makeshift is adopted, and all concerned unite in a shameful scramble to misappropriate the funds."

The old hereditary aristocracy of beys and agas, often semi-independent, was replaced by a poor and greedy officialdom. Most of the arrogant pashas were wide awake only to their own interest, nor even intelligently to that; and their subordinates bettered the example set them in high places. The main task of governing was screwing as much as possible out of the unfortunate tax-payers, and so as to let as little as possible slip past the hands of collectors, who in spirit and methods descend from the odious publican of old. Public spirit and patriotism appear scarcely known among a people of extortioners and their victims, the latter never unwilling, sometimes eager, to accept any foreign deliverer from their present tyrant. Where, now and then, an honest and active official made efforts at improvement, these were as likely as not to lead to his downfall; and, in any case, he could not count on a secure tenure of power to carry out a struggle against the inert force of custom. In one city we hear of the governor being changed ten times in four years. Midhat Pasha, who brought disgrace upon himself as a reformer, was governor at Baghdad, Damascus, Smyrna, Tripoli, and other places, but at none of them for long. A local ruler, powerful for petty tyranny, reflected the central focus of court favour, where at any moment a cloud of disfavour might arise to blight his dignity, as would almost certainly be his fate unless he could wring from the province under him a satisfactory contribution to the general sink of bribery and corruption at Constantinople. The Young Turks' revolution failed to fulfil its promises of amendment; and the German domination, under which it fell, has spread







The Unchanging East: primitive farming in Asia Minor

Underwood & Underwood

The true son of Islam holds stiffly to his old ways. Still, as in Scriptural days, the countryman tills his land with a sharpened stake drawn by oxen or buffaloes.

a further blight on lands whose enchantment for the eye of imagination proves a miserable mirage when seen close at hand.

Thus it was that Turkish Asia remained a loose bundle of backward and feeble provinces, after traversing which many a stranger, like Dr. Ainsworth, had to report that he found "nothing but indolence, poverty, and exaction—ignorance, fanaticism, and rapacity". *Vilayet* is the usual title of the administrative divisions, each under a *Vali*, or governor, with his subordinate officials, *Mudirs*, *Mutesarifs*, *Caimacams*, *Cadis*, and so forth, down to the *Zaptiehs*, who very ill perform some of the duties of policemen. Their authority in the case of foreigners has been hitherto much curbed by the European consuls, acting as judges for their own nationalities, under capitulations with Turkey, cancelled

shortly before the outbreak of the war. The currency is the Turkish pound, *lira*, or gold medjidié (18s.), divided into 100 *piastres*, with *paras* as a smaller denomination. The silver medjidié, or dollar, that should be worth 3s. 4d., like other coins does not always pass at its face value. In the country districts, payments are more often made in kind than in scarce coin.

Of the customs of so mingled a people it is impossible to give any general view, and their costume varies from the sheepskin of the Kurdish shepherd to the closely-buttoned frock-coat and trousers of the townsman or official. Much of what is to be said about Persia more or less applies to the food, houses, manners, and morals found across the Turkish border: it is by gradual transition that are reached the partly Europeanized features of life on the Mediter-

anean, though in most respects the true son of Islam holds stiffly to his old ways. Like other Orientals, the lazy Turk, when not driven to work, delights to sit in the cloudland of his long pipe, and to toy with the wives whom he jealously secludes from other eyes, while here the peasantry, schooled by need, appear often industrious, honest, frugal, and faithful to the one wife, who is indeed less a partner than an attached menial. Slavery exists in a mitigated form. The fetters of an oppressive rule have eaten deep into the soul of all its subjects. We shall everywhere find ignorance, bigotry, and the heavy hand of custom that keeps the East in its old ways, where still, as in Scriptural days, the countryman tills his land with a sharpened stake drawn by oxen or buffaloes, which sometimes go muzzled when they tread out the corn, and armed herdsmen drive their flocks in search of still waters and green pastures, now on the upland plains, now on the snow-cleared mountain slopes.

The climate has the same extremes as over a great part of Asia, with varieties conditioned by mountains and sea. The bare treeless uplands that form a great part of the interior are in winter buried under snow, in summer parched to dust. The rivers, at one season shrunk to a thread, to be again swollen by spring torrents, water green valleys that too often degenerate into fever-breeding swamps. On the coasts the temperature becomes more genial, resembling that of south-eastern Europe, whose flora thrives on the outer slopes, where forests or fields get a lion's share of rainfall coming from the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Much of the land, even in what may be called the less uncivilized quarters, has gone out of cultivation; but it is now fairly free from dangerous beasts, unless on some rugged borders. The woods are often destroyed or reduced to scrub by the nibbling of goats. The different aspects and productions of nature will, however, best be dealt with incidentally, as we visit each of the main divisions.

Travelling through this region, like most other Turkish arrangements shows much

room for improvement. On its time-honoured roads, mostly bad, sometimes existing only as broken stretches, often bridgeless, trade is carried on by caravans, in which the patient camel makes the chief motive power. Rough carts and wagons, conveyance on which proves a jolting torture, will not everywhere be available. *Khans*, what are elsewhere called caravan-serais, are provided as harbour for travellers; here and there may be found a kind of poor inn, whose name, *locanda*, suggests European influence; and every Turkish village has its guest-house, where the heads of the community see to the entertainment of strangers. The roads are not always safe; in some parts the traveller must let himself be hampered by an escort—as to which the question sometimes is *quis custodiet custodes?*—in others, the officials frankly confess that they can promise no safety, except to arms and numbers. A good deal has been done in our time to put down the open brigandage that once made it perilous to ramble even in the outskirts of such a city as Smyrna; but this is said to increase at first rather than diminish with the making of railways, nor did the War lessen it.

The railways which have been opened from the western coast should eventually bring about a great change, though as yet their traffic be not very great, most of them seeming to find one passenger train a day enough for the local needs. About their stations, on the edge of old cities, soon grows up a new quarter veneered by foreign influences. From the Asian side of the Bosphorus, one line runs south almost across the Anatolian peninsula to Konia, giving off a branch to Angora in the centre of Asia Minor, and on the other side connected with a line pushed inland from Smyrna. From Konia started the great Baghdad railway, promoted by the Germans, when they began to cast business-like eyes on this undeveloped region. It had taken longer to construct than the eight years given for this enterprise; but at the date of the Great War it was at work in separate stretches solidly laid under the direction of German engineers, with stations usually



Turkish Peasants, in the neighbourhood of Brusa

some two miles outside the towns they served, built for defence in case of need, so as to be nicknamed "German castles". Syria had already several railways, from Beyrout and from Haifa inland to Damascus and Aleppo; then a short one from Jaffa to Jerusalem; and as the latter brings pilgrims at ease to one holy place, a line has been constructed southward from Damascus with the design of crossing the desert to Mecca, visited annually by so many devotees under such great difficulties. The activity of Russia in railway-making stirred the Porte to let European speculators do for it what a good and solvent Government should be forward in doing of its own motion.

We are now to survey a region famous in myth and in history, provinces whose modern names are often less familiar to Europe than those of their old greatness, scenes of resounding conquest, once mighty cities long dwindled or decayed, their squalid

houses perhaps quarried out of massive ruins, rivers better known in poetry than in trade reports, mountains and deserts whose features have coloured our own language, spots that were the first nursery of our faith. On its native soil, indeed, Christianity has not borne the best fruit, divided as it is into several rival and fissiparous communions, often as much out of sympathy with each other as with their Moslem oppressors. Of the most flourishing of these bodies, the Armenian Church, and of sects into which Islam's two main divisions as Sunnite and Shiah have also split, an account will come in better farther on; but here it may be well to give a sketch of the other Christian churches surviving in this region, whose chief sects claim to represent the oldest civilization in the world, the Assyro-Chaldeans, scattered over Asia Minor, as also into Persia and India.

The Nestorians have now their chief seat



in the mountains between Lake Van and Lake Urumia, where they hold out in well-watered valleys drained by the Great Zab into the Tigris; they are also found scattered southwards into Mesopotamia, and eastward across the Persian frontier, beyond which come traces of them in Central Asia. This once widely-spread community has dwindled to numbers of which 200,000 is the highest estimate. They are understood to derive their doctrines from Nestorius, who in the fifth century made a schism as to the divine and human nature of Christ; but they themselves repudiate connection with this heresiarch, and some writers have taken the name to be a corruption of Nazarene; they prefer the title Church of the East, that at one time spread its branches from Syria to China, its head perhaps reported to Crusaders as the mysterious Prester John. This Church rejects confession and the worship of images. Their priests, though not their bishops, may marry, and act as patriarchal rulers of villages, defended by mountain seclusion, where, in dress, manners, and morals, they often resemble their Kurdish neighbours. The main body has for head an hereditary patriarch, seated at Kochanes, between Lakes Van and Urumia; but, like its rival neighbours, Nestorianism has suffered schism, one branch having grafted itself on the Roman Church, under a patriarch at Mosul, while another, with a separate patriarch at Baghdad, is said to assert independence as the old Chaldean Church. Accounts of these divisions seem a little confused and contradictory, but agree in claiming no high share of Christian graces for Nestorian believers, upon whom Protestants and Catholics see cause to push their work of conversion. After monkish heralds, American missionaries were first in this field; but of late the Church of England also has sought to cultivate a patronage of the Nestorians. The underground churches, in which for many centuries they have been able to hide their sacred books from ever threatening foes, at least have nursed the merit of faithful consistency.

The Jacobite Church is another body of

perhaps the same doubtful numbers, found scattered over Mesopotamia and Syria. Their peculiar tenet, derived like their name from Jacobus, a Syrian monk of Justinian's age, is the monophysite nature of Christ, in which they agree with the Coptic, Abyssinian, and Armenian Churches. They also have divided, one branch, which in ritual and other respects is akin to the Greek Church, owning as its head the titular Patriarch of Antioch, whose seat was moved to Diarbekir, while in Syria a rival patriarch leads those who have come into communion with Rome; and this latter branch is said to be increasing at the expense of the other.

The Sabians, or Mandæans, now found settled chiefly on the Lower Euphrates and in the south-west corner of Arabia, hardly deserve the Christian name. They call themselves Christians of St. John the Baptist, and make much use of water in baptism and other ceremonial purifications, but their belief seems to be a medley of other creeds, in which the Baptist figures as a chief manifestation of the divine. Another sect called Syrian Sabians, that took its rise in Mesopotamia and is now extinct, appears to have been a still more feebly-tinctured heathenism.

The Lebanon is the fortress of the Maronites, whose founder, Maron, also spun metaphysical cobwebs as to the nature of Christ; and his warlike followers have been able to defend their traditions for centuries, though in our time hard pressed by their unbelieving neighbours the Druses. While maintaining a certain degree of spiritual independence, they sought protection in the Roman fold, which all over this region has vied with the Greek Church and with chiefly American Protestants in seeking to gather those strayed sheep.

Even the Greeks scattered through Asia Minor are split into three communions, Orthodox, Catholic, and a compromising body that looks up to Rome but does not conform to all its practices and doctrines. For most forms of nominal Christianity here the late war made a fiery furnace in which some of them are too like to have undergone further decomposition, if not utter destruc-

tion; while the missionary activities of Europe and America must also have suffered violent interference.

The results of the War are still, unfortunately, not clearly settled. After Stamboul's power had been overthrown in all its ill-ruled dependencies, the victorious Alliance hoped to secure a peaceful and orderly regeneration under mandates trusted to its members undertaking the charge of separate regions that seemed unfit at once to organize themselves as independent states. Britain was to administer Mesopotamia and Palestine, France to take charge of Syria, in the welfare of whose largely Christian population she had long been concerned; and Greece to hold coastal districts of Asia Minor in which Greeks are the chief element of population. This design was crippled by the helpless dissensions of Russia, that should have played a great part in the settlement, as also by abstention of the United States, vainly looked to for realization of its sympathetic interest in Armenia and Syria. And from within arose hot opposition at different points. The Arabs claimed to dominate that extensive territory in which they make a solid body among scattered fragments of races and creeds; and an Arab state was set up at Damascus under the headship of the Emir Feisul, son of the King of the Hedjaz, another of whose sons was proposed as ruler for Mesopotamia. There was agitation in Syria for an undivided state, to include Palestine, where the British undertaking to foster a Jewish return to Zion gave natural offence to the Moslem inhabitants. On the east and west sides British and French troops had to combat bands of undisciplined Arab patriots, while more considerate but inexperienced leaders of

this race sought to gain their ends by diplomacy.

The most serious obstacle to reorganization has been a new spirit of defiant patriotism shown by the "Nationalist" Turks led by Kemal Pasha, who, passing from Europe into Asia Minor, there truculently flouted both the Porte and the Allies. The long delay in concluding peace went to strengthen this movement, which by congenial means of massacre and pillage terrorized a great part of Anatolia into submission, when some districts besought Christian protection from its atrocities. In its fierce desperation it appealed at once to Moslem fanaticism and to perversions of freedom, proclaiming Bolshevik principles and alliance with Russian revolutionary extremists, while it invited the African Senussi chief's aid to stir up a Holy War. At Angora, Kemal assembled a parliament claiming to be the *de facto* Government of Turkey. So high were its pretensions that it sent representatives to a London Conference on revision of the treaty with Turkey, and a hearing was secured for them by contagious agitation among our Mohammedan subjects. The Allies, after at first resisting Kemal's forces in the seaboard provinces, had left them to gather strength in the interior, till in 1921 Greece took the field to carry out its mandate.

The issue of this and other struggles being still in doubt at the time of writing, any account of what was Turkey in Asia must be imperfect as to new conditions and limits so confusedly in dispute. This much can be said with some confidence, that under any rule most of the region can hardly be worse off than it has been in the hands of a Government efficient mainly for obstruction and oppression.

## ANATOLIA

Asia Minor, the Greek Anatolia, the Italian Levant, "Land of the sunrise", is properly the projecting point between the Black Sea and that corner of the Mediterranean known as the Levant. It justifies its ancient name in being an epitome of Greater Asia, a mass of table-lands on a smaller scale than that of the great central plateau, with which it is connected through Persia, edged and seamed also by mountain chains, huge compared with those of Britain, but only half the height of the Himalayas and the Hindoo Koosh. The interior plains rise to over 4000 feet, enclosed on the east and south by the great Taurus and Anti-Taurus ranges starting off from among the Armenian uplands, names which have been used rather loosely by geographers, and which locally are replaced by special titles for their prominent masses, with the affix *Tagh* or *Dagh*. On the north side runs another chain of broken links. The point of the promontory, too, is wrinkled by mountain folds, so as to form a picturesque succession of highlands and river valleys opening on to the coast plains. Its whole length is about 700 and its breadth 400 miles, making a compact country larger than the German empire, but with a population not much over half a dozen millions.

The lowest layer of this population, so far as we can penetrate its strata, seems to be the almost forgotten people called Hittites, whose undeciphered inscriptions are the oldest of thickly-strewn monuments to a succession of former civilizations that before the War were being actively disclosed and examined by German as well as English and American archæologists. Upon the blending of now indistinguishable elements float masses of varied humanity which hold together in a state rather of mechanical than of chemical mixture. On the top come the Osmanli Turks, whose supremacy has blighted at once their own character and the regions that show so many ruins of welfare under former masters. The general

state of Asia Minor is one of pitiable decay. Wide stretches of land have gone out of cultivation. High, open plains give pasture to half-wild herdsmen, wandering in summer, and in winter huddling into poor villages. The towns, which seldom want the merit of romantic situation, are often shrunk within their old limits, and like choked-up harbours and highways gone to ruin, speak of a nation "in its second childhood", while here and there blooming districts show what might be made of the soil, or an emporium near the coast is kept prosperous mainly by foreign stimulus.

"I despair of conveying the impression of melancholy which this coast of Asia Minor makes upon the traveller, whatever be his political or religious prepossessions. Here is a country blessed with every gift of nature, a fertile soil, possessing every variety of exposure and situation, a mild and equable climate, mines of iron, copper, silver, and coal in the mountains, a land of exquisite beauty, which was once studded with flourishing cities and filled by an industrious population. And now from the Euphrates to the Bosphorus all is silence, poverty, despair. There is hardly a sail on the sea, hardly a village on the shores, hardly a road by which commerce can pass into the interior. You ask the cause, and receive from everyone the same answer. Misgovernment, or rather no government; the existence of a power which does nothing for its subjects, but stands in the way when there is a chance of doing something for themselves."

Such were Lord Bryce's reflections off the coast of the ancient Pontus, now the Turkish province of Trebizond, lying between the northern mountains and the sea, which here Xenophon's weary band hailed so gladly after their long harassed march, as many a traveller coming down from the bare heights of Armenia has seen Eden in the blooming plains and glens of this sheltered strip, watered by short mountain torrents. The modern name of the province

is given by its chief city and seaport, the classical Trapezus, that Trebizond once famous in our Middle-Age romances, from the days when a branch of the dying Byzantine empire took precarious root here, and knightly adventurers hence pushed far into the Armenian mountains, leaving behind them those ruined fastnesses commonly

hard to be precise in figures taken from varying estimates and fluctuating states of prosperity. After the Russian conquest of the Caucasus, Trebizond was for a time infested by myriads of Circassian emigrants taking refuge with their co-believers, upon whom they settled like a swarm of locusts; and a reign of terror prevailed in the dis-



Trebizond: a view of the town and harbour from above the Demendera Road

known as Genoese castles, though the Genoese were only one division of the crusading invaders that for a time sought to play in Asia Minor a part afterwards given up to the conquering Turk. Trebizond, picturesquely displayed on a terraced amphitheatre among lovely environs, is the chief harbour of this coast, and might be called the port of Turkish Armenia, from which came a great proportion of 40,000 inhabitants it had before the War. 'This, as elsewhere, may be given as a round number, if we bear in mind that all over Turkish ground it is

strict till these barbarian patriots, who cut such a figure in fiction, were spread for wider depredations. During the War the city again suffered through a wholesale massacre of Armenians.

The principal road leading inland is that to Persia by Erzeroum, which, like most other roads of the peninsula, is a succession of ups and downs, here little better than a rocky staircase, there improved into a fair highway by some spasm of energy on the part of a reforming pasha, then again showing the ruins of an ancient causeway, beside

which generations of camels and mules have worn more convenient tracks, beasts of burden far oftener seen on them than *arabas*, the jolting ox-carts that are almost the only vehicles of this country. Yet Pontus, with its fertile coast-land, is one of the comparatively flourishing parts of Asia Minor. Where culture ceases, thick forests are nursed by the rainfall from the sea, and the slopes will be gay in spring with familiar blooms of a temperate clime, as Mr. Lynch describes on the road to Erzeroum. "The brakes were a mass of bloom; a little higher we met the azaleas; the yellow azalea and the pale-mauve petal of the rhododendron were in the splendour of their latest blossoming. In the lush forest we noticed the beech tree, the walnut and the maple, the hazel, the oak, and the elm; the elders were in full flower, and the cherry trees were conspicuous for their number and size. The more open spaces were covered with masses of forget-me-nots; calyces of hellebore, withered yellow, rested on the rank grass; and yellow mullein, filling the air with its subtle perfume, rose from among the rocks." Higher up, firs succeeded beech-woods, and greenery shrunk to ribands by the edge of watercourses. But on the southern side of the mountain ridge in June the rim of the Armenian table-land showed dry and bare but for patches of buttercups by the bed of a river among stony downs—such humble touches of home meet the wanderer in the sternest wilds.

Batoum, the port at the eastern end of the Black Sea, we have already visited. Along the coast westward comes Samsoun, a modernized town, once a great Greek port, and still a considerable starting-place of inland trade. This lies in the region of the fabulous Amazons, between the mouths of the Jeshil Irmak and the Kizil Irmak, rivers that, both rising in the northern mountain range, their waters at one point close together, take very different courses.

The former has a comparatively short run behind the coast range, finding a gap through which it turns straight to the sea, it and its tributaries watering a country that should be known to every schoolboy, for

here was the scene of the Roman war with Mithridates, and of the campaign so proudly reported by Cæsar, *Veni, vidi, vici*. Upon it stand Tokat, a mainly Armenian town, where is the grave of Henry Martyn, the missionary; and Amasia, birthplace of Strabo, the ancient geographer, also of Osman Pasha, the great Turkish general of our own time, a place celebrated for apples, pears, and other fruit, as for its rock monuments and traditions. Amasia is one of the most picturesquely placed cities of Asia Minor; and one of the most prosperous, in the same region, is Marsivan, notable for an American missionary college that has shone in the native darkness of ignorance. By these towns runs the road from Samsoun to Baghdad, which is described as being the busiest highway in Anatolia.

The Kizil Irmak, the classical Halys, wanders away far to the south, making a loop of 800 miles through the heart of the peninsula of which it is the chief river. Passing Sivas, the capital of the province so named, in part representing Armenia Minor, it flows down into the ancient Cappadocia, draining the high inland plain on which stands Cæsarea—a name repeated in the Roman world like our *Kingstowns* and *Victorias*—now known as Kaisariyeh. This is a city of commercial importance with some 60,000 inhabitants, though fallen from the days when nearly half a million were sheltered within its restricted fortifications, beyond which rich vineyards and orchards are littered with ancient ruin. Both Sivas and Kaisariyeh have been centres of missionary work, Protestant as well as Catholic, among a notably fanatical population. South of the latter the isolated mountain mass of Ergish-Tagh, or Argæus, (about 13,000 feet) is believed to be the loftiest point of Asia Minor. The volcanic district about this is remarkable for the manner in which its cliffs and cones have been excavated for ancient chambers, galleries, chapels, and tombs, in some parts by thousands.

Farther to the west the Kizil Irmak, barred by the Taurus masses, changes the direction which has brought it more than half-way across the peninsula towards the

Mediterranean, henceforth bearing north, and making a bend back eastward so as to describe the greater part of a circle. Thus it traverses the large and mountainous central province of Angora, the scriptural Galatia, known for the long silky hair of its goats, which came largely to Bradford, in Yorkshire, to be used in the manufacture of mohair and alpaca. Angora, the chief city, centre of this trade and terminus of a railway branch, has of late come into fresh note as head-quarters of Kemal Pasha and his "Nationalist" Government. With its ruined battlements and tall minarets it stands imposingly on a hill, at the disadvantage that all drinking-water must be carried on hard-worked donkeys from the stream below. This, cut off by mountains from the Kizil Irmak basin, runs down to the Sakaria River, that takes its bending course to the western end of the Black Sea. On all sides the country seems a labyrinth of ridges, upon whose wintry heights not only the goats, but the sheep and other animals have developed such warm fleece. Goats are extirpating enemies of vegetation on the bare uplands; but the lower heights will often be covered with vineyards; and between are hollows of rich soil, more or less well cultivated, where even a miserable village may once have had a name in the world, like that Gordium at which Alexander cut the Gordian knot. Colonel Burnaby thus depicts a scene in the Angora country:

"A succession of hills, each one loftier than its fellows, broke upon us as we climbed the steep. They were of all forms, shades, and colours—ash-grey, blue, vermilion, robed in imperial purple, and dotted with patches of vegetation. Our road wound amidst these chameleon-like heights. Silvery rivulets streamed down the sides of the many-coloured hills. A rising sun showered its gleaming rays upon the sparkling cascades. They flashed and reflected the tints and shadows. A gurgling sound of many waters arose from the depths below. We reach the summit of the highest hill. The scene changes. We look down upon a vast plain. It is surrounded on all sides by undulating heights. The white sandy soil of the valley throws still more into relief the many-coloured mountains. Patches of snow

deck the more distant peaks. The sun is dispelling the flossy clouds which overhang the loftier crags. The filmy vapour floats away into space, caressing for a few moments the mountains' crests; it is wafted onward, and then disappears from our view."

We return to the north coast, on which the classical Paphlagonia and Bithynia are now the Turkish provinces Kastamuni and Ismid. Beyond the mouth of the Kizil Irmak comes a bay, on the sandy western horn of which Sinope makes naturally one of the best harbours on this coast, where the Turkish fleet was destroyed by the Russians as a prelude to the Crimean War; but the town has sunk from its importance as a great Greek seaport, birthplace of the cynic Diogenes, who here might have his old difficulty in finding an honest man, still more one in whom honesty was united with business-like enterprise.

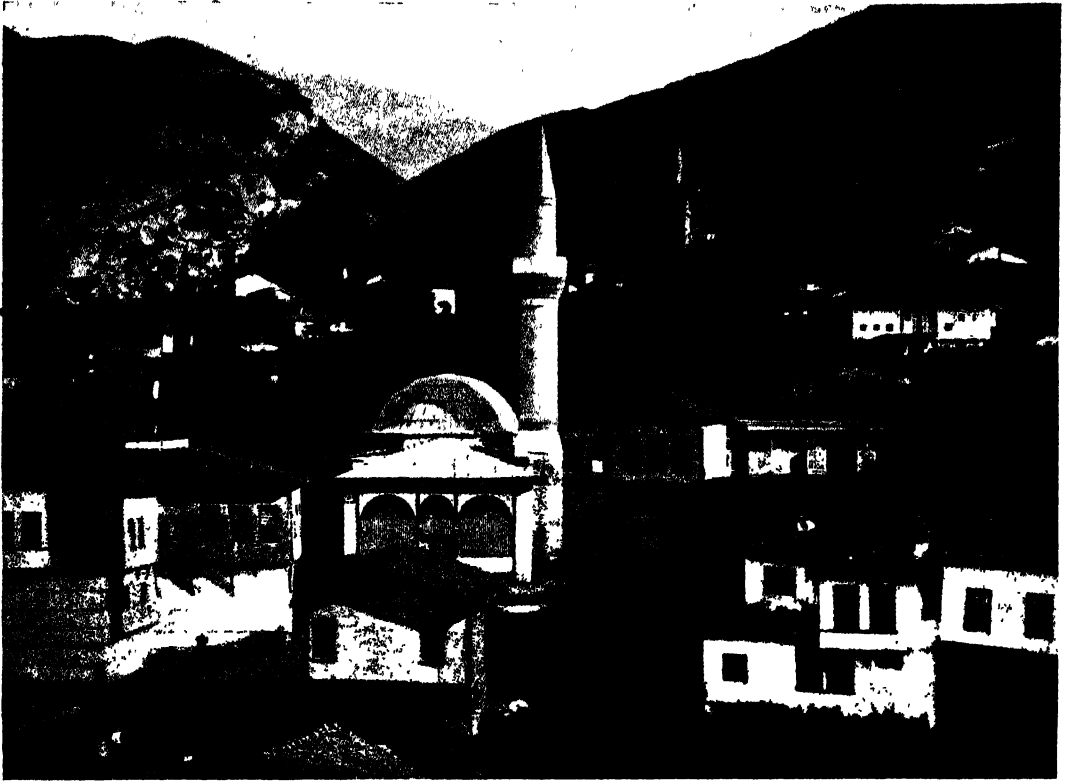
There is no other port of note till we reach the Bosphorus, that famous strait connecting the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmora. At the southern end of this is Scutari, the Asian suburb of Constantinople, whose main feature, beyond "dirty lanes and filthy streets", is the vast cypress-shaded cemetery, to which European Turks are brought for thickly-packed burial in their native earth. There are thousands of British graves, too, at Scutari, marked by one great national monument, for here was our hospital depot during the Crimean War, when Florence Nightingale taught Englishwomen how to soothe pain and sickness. Constantinople itself, known to the Turks as Stamboul, is venerated by them as the chief seat of their race; and travellers of all nations have extolled the prospect on either side of the straits, the city, lying along the Golden Horn inlet, making one of the most striking panoramas in the world, spreading along the shore in miles of palatial mansions that mask its interior decay. The group of towns and villages on the Asian side, about Scutari, forms a considerable place, with no small trade of its own, the population, by one estimate, being over 70,000. One of these villages is famous in Church history

as scene of the Council of Chalcedon, whose decision on a much-vexed question of divinity opened the Armenian schism.

From Haïdar Pasha on this side of the Bosphorus starts a railway line to Ismid, the ancient Nicomedia, standing at the head of a deep gulf, up which it can be reached from Constantinople by steamer also. This, one of the great cities of the Roman empire, has still some importance as a diverging point of main roads from the capital through Asia Minor, eastward by Erzeroum to Persia, over the centre of the peninsula to the valley of the Euphrates, and by Aleppo to Syria and Baghdad. Through plain country about Ismid comes the trunk of the railways that are opening up this corner of Asia Minor. A short branch goes off to Ada Bazar, on the lower course of the Sakaria River, which the main line follows southward to climb on to the central plateau and reach Eski Shehr (*old city*), hitherto best known for its mines of meersch-  
 schaum, now risen to new life as a chief railway junction and depot. Here turns eastward what was the original main line to Angora. The more recently constructed German railway holds on southward through the ancient Phrygia, among whose wild hills are found rock-hewn sepulchres and dwellings older than the monuments of Greece and Rome. The high plains of this region were once strongholds of the Ottoman Turks, who by valour and virtue overcame their rival kinsmen before making the settlement in Europe that seems like to end with such fatal degeneration. The line passes by Kutahia (*Cotyaum*), taken to be the birthplace of Æsop, then by Afium Kara Hissar (Black Castle of Opium), a town dominated, like so many others, by a fortress-crowned rock, the Hapsburg of the Osman dynasty, about which are the best poppy-fields of Asia Minor. The name Hissar, as we have more than once seen, means a castle, Kara being black; and this name has here been extended to or borrowed from the dark range called Kara Hissar-i-Sahib, which the railway pierces by a pass that has rung with the mail of crusading knights and their Saracen foes, then comes

down to Konia (*Iconium*), a city of note long before it became the capital of the Seljuk Turks, who had nearly anticipated the Ottomans in their conquest across the Bosphorus. This, besides being a place of considerable trade, is a goal of pilgrimage for its tombs of Turkish hero saints, while undevout travellers can admire the richly-adorned mosques and medresses, the ruins of the Seljuk palace, and classical sculptures counting among the finest of such relics. Konia, on a high plain behind the Taurus range, is made the starting-point of the line to Baghdad; and it should have had connection with a British railway from Smyrna, which, under German influence, was brought to a halt some way short of it, while a French line, also from Smyrna, touched the main route at Afium Kara Hissar, but the Sultan's enlightened Government had the rails torn up at the junction. These gaps of continuity should now be filled in.

Let us again turn back to follow the coast from the Sea of Marmora. The most flourishing city in the north-western corner of Asia Minor, with the exception perhaps of Scutari, is Brusa, at the foot of the Mysian Olympus, from which a short railway runs down to Mudania, its port on the Sea of Marmora. Brusa was capital of the Osmanli empire for a time, before the conquest across the straits; and it has now manufactures of silk, wool, brocade, leather, &c., that support a population of 100,000 in the town and its surrounding suburbs, one of which has from classical times been famous for its hot sulphur baths. Occupied temporarily by our forces after the war, it may again become the Sultan's capital if he be turned out of Europe. Beautifully situated, it is well built for an Asian town, a picturesque mass of red roofs about a citadel towering aloft on a commanding height, and it contains many fine mosques and monuments of sultans, besides Greek and Armenian churches, and Jewish synagogues. Violent earthquakes have not destroyed all traces of antiquity here, nor at the ancient Nicea, on Lake Iznik to the north-east, a place famed by the meeting of that council (A.D. 315) that drew up one of our creeds.



Brusa: a general view showing Mount Olympus

To the west of Brusa are two large lakes and a confluence of streams, beyond which we pass into the ancient Mysia, cut off from Europe by the long narrow Dardanelles, with its imposing fortresses and legendary sites, that historic strait crossed by Xerxes and recrossed by Alexander, then once and again by the Turkish hosts that were to overwhelm the decay of Grecian virtue. The channel is so narrow— $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles at one point—that Lord Byron could boast of swimming across it in little more than an hour, without such a bright beacon as guided Leander. When we turn the corner southward, we stand upon the most sacred ground of ancient minstrelry, for here is the Troad, watered by the Simois and Scamander, flowing between woods and swamps from the heights of Mt. Ida to the shore where Besika Bay harbours modern fleets in view

of Tenedos and Imbros and the heights of Samothrace. To-day miserable Turkish villages dot the plain on which buffaloes graze among mounds taken to be the graves of Achilles, Ajax, and other heroes to whom genius has given immortality. It may be they never lived but in poetical imagination, it may be that Ilium itself was but a "baseless fabric", around which an "unsubstantial pageant" took airy shape as the most renowned of wars. At all events, at Hissarlik Dr. Schliemann's researches here unearthed the remains of a succession of prehistoric cities, amongst which is taken to have been old Troy, that, on a site commanding the entrance to the Hellespont, may well have offered a challenge to maritime adventurers like the Argonauts. Farther to the south are the extensive Roman ruins of Troas, now Eski Stamboul, from which



St. Paul sailed on his mission to Macedonia.

The island-studded west coast is boldly broken by high promontories and deep natural havens. Southward, the Mysian shore is succeeded by that of Lydia, seat of Ionian culture, where the Hermus, the Turkish Gediz-Chai, flows into the deep Gulf of Smyrna, a natural haven forty miles long. At the head of this stands Smyrna, that "Oriental Naples", Asia Minor's chief city, and one of the great ports of the world, fortunate in its safe roomy harbour, and its situation on the edge of a populous and industrious region of hill and valley enjoying a more genial climate than do the bare uplands of the interior. The population is some 300,000, at least half of them Greeks. Several thousand European foreigners lived here, under the protection and jurisdiction of their consuls, England hitherto most numerously represented, but French was their common language, and Germans had been more and more coming forward in the commercial community. There is a still larger proportion of Catholics Christian "of sorts" lumped together with the Europeans as "Franks", a name that here has worn off part of its reproach, so much so that "Ismir" is denounced by stricter Moslem zeal as an "infidel city". To such a strong foreign admixture, and to more enlightened governors than have usually been bestowed on Asia Minor, the city owes its prosperity and wealth, gained less through its weaving of the Turkey carpets we know at home, then as distributing-point for the productions of the rich province of Aidin, opened up by railways which have here their focus, as well as by long camel caravans, bringing to the sea silk, cotton, opium, madder, oil, figs, raisins, and grain, carrying back from Europe manufactured articles and other imported wares. As at Brusa, raw silk is an important production, which here as elsewhere has had to contend with disease in the worms. Cotton also is much grown in the valleys of this coast, where, during the War, Greek communities were cruelly harried, driven to take refuge by myriads on the islands or the mainland of Greece, not very kindly welcomed when their

troops of living skeletons went on raising the prices of provisions in congested areas. The Greek town of Aivali was sacked with the old soldierly atrocities by German order. It was noted that the resentful Turkish authorities showed here more ferocity to the Greeks than to other foreigners in this time of persecution.

Smyrna, which displays handsome marble buildings, sometimes quarried from the remains of its ancient state, is divided into four quarters, rising in tiers upon the heights. On the harbour are the Frank town, and that inhabited by Greeks and Armenians; above this come the poor dwellings and narrow dirty streets housing some 20,000 Jews, and higher up the Turkish quarter, mostly built of wood, bristling with minarets and cypresses. Above all, on the hills, the airy residences of the chief merchants are grouped about Bournabat and other beautiful suburban villages, refuges from the plague and pests that infest the crowded port. Behind opens the swampy valley of the Meles, where the older Smyrna is believed to have stood. The modern city is the seat of a Greek and of an Armenian archbishop, and contains several institutions by which the rival creeds vied with each other in a public spirit and philanthropy not often manifest in Turkish dominions. Such were the Greek College, with its museum and library, endowed by the munificence of wealthy Greeks; the Konak, a block of Government buildings which we might call the town-hall; the Greek Hospital; the Turkish Hospital in its beautiful gardens, near which a large barrack made a home for our convalescent soldiers in the Crimean War; the Deaconesses' Institution, a German school for the education of girls; then outside of the town, reached by tramway, the Turkish school for Orphan Boys, and the Government School of Commerce and Agriculture.

Smyrna was a very ancient Greek colony, though it now shows few signs of age unless in massive ruins on the hills, or the classical legends associated with such spots as the Lake of Tantalus, and what is shown as tomb of that sorely-tried offender, near

## Anatolia



One of the great Ports of the World: the harbour front, Smyrna

Bournabat. In the Bath of Diana, another pretty pool, among fragments of what seems to have been a marble temple, were found statues of Diana and Bacchus. This is one of the seven cities that claimed the birth of Homer, whose tomb is declared to be hidden in ruins two miles from Bournabat, and he is fondly held to have written his Iliad in a vanished grotto near Diana's Bath. For a more authentic association, the village of Cordelio, on the bay, preserves the name of Richard Cœur de Lion, who lived here for a time in his crusading days. Another fame Smyrna has is as one of the Seven Churches addressed in the Apocalypse, this city being the only one that still continues to flourish in a material sense, while it is to be feared that its spiritual life might no longer merit the approval by which it and Philadelphia were distinguished among the seven. The neighbourhood has had a bad name for

brigands, who in one noted case were got rid of by being enlisted as police; and the disorders of the War did not strengthen distinctions between *meum* and *tuum*. But Smyrna, with the district about it, was at Paris arranged to be set free from Turkish misgovernment, passing into possession or under protectorate of Greece with a mandate to prove if it can revive its ancient colonizing activity on the coasts of Asia Minor. The white-and-blue flag of Greece flying over Smyrna is not admired by other foreigners, especially the Italians, who had a covetous eye here, and the Jews, who find in modern Hellenism a keen commercial rivalry with Hebraism. At the revision of the Peace Treaty in London, 1921, it was proposed to leave Turkey a qualified sovereignty here, under a Christian governor backed by a Greek force in the city. Soon afterwards, Greek troops

advanced into the interior, but fared ill in their first encounter with Kemal's army, so it remained to be seen if they could emulate the ancient Greeks in guarding the seaboard of this region.

The sites of most of the Seven Churches, and of other once great cities, may be visited from Smyrna by rail, so closely are the past and the present drawn together in this corner of Asiatic Turkey where modern enterprise has taken its firmest footing. The railway running inland by Aidin was the first opened in Asia outside of British Indian territory. As it turns away from the coast, 50 miles south of Smyrna, it comes close to the scanty relics of Ephesus, where once stood that rich temple of Diana, one of the Old World's seven wonders, the great theatre and circus, and many a palace, constructed out of its own marble quarries on Mount Prion. Of this magnificence only fragments remain, half buried in the soil, built into Turkish walls, or scattered in Moslem mosques and European museums; and the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, those Asian Rip Van Winkles who, according to old legend, enjoyed such a long nap in a mountain cave, would find cause for amazement could they now be roused by the whistle of a locomotive rattling past their retreat. Apart from war and earthquake, which have done so much to ruin Asian cities, Ephesus owes its decay to the silting up of the once open port into a feverish marsh; and it appears that Smyrna is in danger of the same fate, if its new masters do not clear away the bank of mud and sand by which the River Hermus threatens to choke its bay. On the whole coast of the Levant, indeed, intermittently torrential streams are working a similar change.

Turning inland here, the line runs among hills covered with fig-orchards, vineyards, olives, and pomegranates, and to the south commands glimpses of rich barley-fields through which the Meander describes its sinuous windings, supplying to our language a word that might have been taken nearer home from the Wye in Herefordshire or the Links of Forth below Stirling. Patches of poppies, too, are seen appropriately

fringing the Lethe, on which stand the ruins of Magnesia ad Meandrum—to be distinguished from another place of this name, the modern Manissa—where Themistocles is said to have died in exile. Inland, and farther south, grain is more grown than the varied crops of the Greek coast fringe. Figs are the special produce of the country about Aidin, a prosperous and picturesque town, busy in cotton manufacture, which gives its name to this province of more than a million inhabitants, and was the original terminus of a line pushed on beyond Dineir south of the Kara-Hissar range, but not allowed by the Turks to be continued. At Seraikeni, 60 miles farther west, the station is within a few miles of Eski Hissar (Old Castle), near which, on the edge of the ancient Phrygia, Laodicea is now a desolate show of tottering walls and rifled tombs. More imposing are the ruins of Hierapolis in this vicinity, another early home of Christianity mentioned by St. Paul, where nature has spread beauty as well as decay by the petrifying waters of a hot spring, pouring liquid marble over incrustated shelves and basins, like those famous terraces destroyed in New Zealand by the same volcanic power as had shaped and coloured them. Not far off was Colossæ, long so utterly demolished that its very name might be forgotten but for the epistle once addressed to its congregation.

The other Churches of the Seven are to be reached by a railway going northwards from Smyrna, then turning up the Hermus valley to fork at Manissa. One line diverges north by Ak-Hissar, a Turkish Perth in its reputation for dyeing, which shows some few fragments of Thyatira built into its walls. This branch goes on to Somah, between which and the coast, in the valley of the Caicus, lies Pergamos, that gave us parchment, still a considerable town (Bergama), presenting some remains, both Greek and Roman, to attest its ancient magnificence; and the rail has been continued to Panderma on the Sea of Marmora. The eastern fork holds on up the Hermus basin, passing Sart, once Sardis, the rich capital of Lydia, where by the banks of the golden Pactolus

Cræsus held his luxurious court, till tempted to dare his fate too far, heedless of the wise Solon's bidding him call no life happy till its end. This city, fabled to have been the origin of gold and silver coin and of dice, makes a striking illustration of the transitoriness of worldly glory, housing now only a few poor herdsmen, with a vast sepulchral

beyond which, round the bold south-western promontories, came Lycia and Pamphylia. The Gulf of Adalia here is named from a considerable town at its head, that boasts a triumphal arch of Hadrian. Some 50 miles to the south of it are the grand ruins of the pirate city Phaselis, and to the east the remains of old Adalia,



Pergamos: the ruined gateway of a Roman theatre

mound for its principal monument. Thirty miles beyond the site of the Lydian capital the line brings us to Allah Shehr (City of God) at the foot of Mount 'Imolus, where nothing is left of the ancient Philadelphia but the name of its faithful Church, represented by the seat of a Greek Archbishop. Hence this railway has been continued along the north side of the Kara Hissar range, to join, at Afium Kara Hissar, the line from Scutari to Konia.

The Meander parted Lydia from Caria,

which as Side was once a notable port; then farther eastward those of the ancient Seleucia; but few modern towns flourish on this coast. Behind the Taurus range, here running parallel to the south coast of Asia Minor, lies the Turkish province that has Konia for its capital, from which the German railway runs on across a high plain to approach the mountains at Eregli. It passes by the decayed Karaman, in mediæval days chief city of a country to which it still gives the name Karamania, a plateau

## The World of To-day

dotted by fresh and salt lakes, the largest of them, Touz Ghieul, about 50 miles long, separated by a mountain range from the course of the Kizil Irmak.

From this plateau, through the Taurus, opens the narrow cleft known of old as the "Cilician Gates", just wide enough for a foaming stream and for the historic road, still showing traces of Roman work, by which so many armies, before and since Xenophon's, have marched down to and up from the coast plains of Cilicia, where pine and beech woods give place to arbutus, lentisks, groups of palms, and other sub-tropical vegetation. This once rich region made the Turkish province of Adana; its great cities of old sadly shrunk like most of its seven rivers, that run to worse than waste in swamping the fertile land; but of late Adana has had some revived prosperity from the cultivation of cotton. Australian gum trees are planted to sanitize the port, Mersina, where legend makes Jonah thrown up after his singular voyage; but another part of the coast also claims the same distinction. This roadstead is connected, by a British-made rail adapted as a branch from the Baghdad line, with the chief city Adana, prosperous through cotton mills, but not over salubrious on its swampy site. It and the whole district won gloomy renown by a fanatical massacre of Armenians that echoed back the disturbances in which Abdul Hamid was overthrown. After the War, Turkish resentment revenged itself in fresh massacres of the helpless Armenians; and there was hot fighting between French troops advancing into Cilicia for their deliverance and the "Nationalist" Turks. Some 200,000 people are left in a province of millions when Cicero was its governor.

Below the opening of the Cilician Gates stands Tarsus, "no mean city", birthplace of St. Paul, once the rival of Athens and Alexandria by its academics, now supported by cotton weaving and the copper-mining industry of the mountains that supplies domestic utensils so familiar in Asia Minor. A swim in the chill waters of the Cydnus is believed still to risk catching such a fever as was Alexander's

experience here; but this shrunken stream would hardly now bear Cleopatra's stately vessel up to Tarsus.

The largest rivers watering the plains of Adana are the Seihun and the Jaihun (the ancient Pyramus) coming down from the Taurus, the latter on the wilder eastern side where pastoral industry prevails as we pass into the mountains. The main range here trends north-eastwards towards Armenia, looking over a mountainous country full of minerals, which should be better exploited by help of the Baghdad railway. To the long valley stretching northwards between the Taurus and the anti-Taurus crests, winter brings down a host of dwellers on those cold mountains, Turkomans, Tartars, Kurds, Circassians, and other races who make up the medley of population in this corner. Beyond the Jaihun we pass eastward into the province of Aleppo and the basin of the Euphrates, much of it here rich in grain, fruit, and cotton, the chief markets for which are the old cities of Marash and Aintab. This country is separated from the Cilician plains by the Amanus range, which, branching off from the Taurus, runs southward behind the gulf of Iskanderoon, remotest inlet of the Levant, its name corrupted from the Alexander who here won his great battle of Issus; but to Europeans the port on it is known rather as Alexandretta. Thus, over Asia Minor we come constantly upon great names where other greatness has long crumbled away. All Cilicia shows the remains of vanished culture, "a vast Pompeii where no man has built or destroyed", as Mr. Hogarth says (*A Wandering Scholar in the Levant*).

"In its capital, Olba, citadel, walls, streets, and roads are choked with brushwood. A triple arch leads into the Forum; on the left the façade of a Temple of Fortune stands in the brake, and in front rise the fluted columns of the Olbian Zeus, whose priests were kings. Passing a ruined portico, the explorer lights suddenly on a theatre lined with tangled vegetation sprouting from every crevice in auditorium and scene. But nothing in the city is more wonderful than the road leading from it to the coast. Mile after mile its embanked pavement runs over the naked rocks; mile

after mile stones, fallen or standing, inscribed with the titles of Roman emperors, record your progress; here you pass a group of tombs, there clatter through an ancient village, and at last wind down sweeping curves to the sea, past towers and tombs rising white out of the scrub; and nowhere in the towers or the villages, on the road or in the city, is there a human being except the wandering shepherds."

Before holding along the Taurus to Armenia, or crossing the Amanus into Syria, we must turn back to Anatolia's coast-line to see how time has dealt with the beautiful islands where once flourished Ionian wealth, enterprise, and culture. The deeply-indented and wildly-broken western shore is thickly set by the Ægean Archipelago, those "Isles of Greece" so dear to the Muses, that have been divided between Asia and Europe. In general the islands, "where all, save the spirit of man, is divine", with a delightful climate, are in a high degree picturesque and productive, abounding in fruit, in wine, and in valuable stone, such as marble and jasper.

The Sea of Marmora shares its name with a marble-quarried eminence, chief among a picturesque string of rocky islets which stud its waters. Outside of the Hellespont comes that island group of classical fame—Lemnos, whose volcanic rocks engendered the legend that here Vulcan fell when hurled from the abode of Jove; the rugged heights of Imbros, rising nearly 2000 feet; and, beyond it, the red marble mass of Samothrace, with Tenedos to the south, each the home of some few thousand peasants and shepherds, mostly Greek. South of them lies Mitylene (Lesbos), birthplace of Alcæus and of Sappho, the largest, richest, and one of the most beautiful of these islands, over 30 miles long, with two grand natural harbours running into the well-cultivated mountain-sides that in its Mount Olympus rise to 3000 feet. It has over 100,000 people, doubled during the War by refugees from Anatolia whom American charity helped to save from starvation. An old castle of its former Italian masters gives the chief town the modern name Kastro. A

second Kastro is the capital of Scio, farther south beyond the Gulf of Smyrna, another rich island cruelly desolated by the Turks in the war of Greek Independence, when it was noted for the beauty of its women as for the turbulent boldness of its born sailors; the resources of Scio also were hard put to it by crowds of fugitives from Turco-German ferocity. The bold promontory opposite, that shuts in the southern side of the gulf, is almost insular.

The next large island, Samos, at the mouth of the gulf on which Ephesus stood, though cut off by only a mile of sea from the mainland, had the peculiarity of a quasi-independence, in which its 40,000 inhabitants have been living under a Greek prince tributary to the Porte; and as its neighbour claimed the "blind old man of Scio's rocky isle", so Samos can boast such names as Polycrates and Pythagoras. Then comes the string of the Sporades, one of which, Cos, from which we get the word "cosmetic", with 10,000 people, names the next deep gulf on the mainland; but the most famous is that little Patmos, to which St. John was banished, as commemorated by a great monastery crowning the island, and by another containing a cavern wherein the Apocalypse is declared to have been written. The else insignificant Astypalea is valuable for a good harbour.

Last of the chain, leaving out of sight the outlying Scarpanto and Caxo that continue it towards Crete, we have Rhodes, second in size to Mitylene, but perhaps most famous of all for its Colossus, that wonder of the old world, and for the establishment here of the knights of St. John, who during more than two centuries held it against the power of the Turks. So anciently colonized from Greece as to figure in Homer's catalogue, the capital town, Rhodes, represents one of the great Dorian cities, of whose magnificence fewer traces remain than of the fortifications left by those military monks, though their massive works have suffered much from earthquakes, and by a ruinous powder explosion in 1857. The whole population is now some 30,000. The island is traversed by mountains rising to nearly

5000 feet, above romantic scenery and cultivated slopes.

Rhodes has now been the centre of a hot dispute between Greece and Italy, which, in its late war for Tripoli, used its naval power to seize outlying Turkish possessions, among them the Dodekanese ("Twelve islands") of which this is the chief. In the great peace settlement Italy sought to assert her right here by possession, as nine points of the law, but was brought to give up the rest of the Dodekanese, while retaining her hold on Rhodes. The other coast islands were claimed by Greece, to which they belong by the best title, and are apportioned to her by the Allied Council; but the retention of Rhodes is one of certain sore points that may inflame future quarrels.

One more name of this region claims to be dwelt on more fully, as of peculiar interest to us. In the Mediterranean's easternmost bay, between the coasts of Asia Minor and of Syria, lies the large island of Cyprus, with its long Cape St. Andrea pointing like a finger towards the Gulf of Iskenderoon, as if to emphasize its natural connection with Asia, from which it has been differentiated by successive European encroachments. It was colonized by the Greeks after the Phœnicians, and conquered by the Romans as by the Egyptians and the Persians. In 1878 it was ceded by Turkey to Britain, to be a Levantine Malta. This is not England's first connection with the island, for in crusading days it fell a prize to our Richard of the Lion Heart, in revenge for the capture of his Queen Berengaria by a Byzantine prince, who played the pirate here. Richard sold it to Guy de Lusignan, the adventurer king of Jerusalem, and from his heirs it passed into the hands of Venice, till her Othellos and Iagos could no longer keep out the still formidable Turk. To this succession of masters Cyprus owes an extraordinary confusion of remains, from Phœnician towers to mediæval castles, monasteries, and churches, mixed together like its heterogeneous population, in whose veins run the blood of so many races.

The inhabitants number over 200,000, most of them Greeks, and less than a quarter

of Moslem faith. The rival creeds, as if schooled by alternating supremacy, seem to live together peaceably enough, though often in separate villages; indeed, Cyprus has one peculiar sect practising both Christian and Mohammedan worship, as if for double benefit of baptism and circumcision. In spite of its numerous and varied churches Cyprus has a bad moral reputation, like that

Land where the cypress and myrtle  
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their  
clime,  
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the  
turtle,  
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime.

Criminal offences appear to be unusually numerous here, under the fair and humane administration of British officials, who maintain freedom of religion and of opinion. The head of our Government is the High Commissioner, assisted by a council, in part elected; but talkative Greek patriots, taking only too kindly to free speech, prove less a help than a hindrance in the beneficent working of liberal institutions; and there is a native agitation, of questionable strength, for union to Greece, which, if it prove genuine and general, may not be resisted by the present holders. Meanwhile, Italy justifies her grasp on Rhodes by the plea of imitating Britain's masterful example.

Cyprus, 145 miles long by 50 or 60 broad, has an area of some 3700 square miles. Along the north and south run mountain crests in which the Taurus once more rises from the sea, the southern range, that repeats the sacred name of Olympus, rising to 6590 feet, snow-crowned in winter, while the other's best-known point is the low but well-marked ridge called Pentedactylon. Between these lies a bare plain, whose natural fertility has been marred by reckless destruction of the forests that once covered the mountains, causing the soil to slip down from their sides, and drying up streams which only for a few hours become rushing torrents after a storm. This matter is being seen to by our Government, which has constructed irrigation works, and nearly succeeded in exterminating the locusts that



Cyprus: the modern town and port of Baffo (New Paphos)

The ancient Paphos (now called Kuklia), where the Roman governor of the island was visited by St. Paul, lies 10 miles east of Baffo. It has long been a complete ruin.

were another agency of destruction. Once the hills are replanted it is hoped to restore the fertility of the soil by an increased rainfall. Want of rain is the chief drawback to a climate in January like our June, with a clearness and softness which gave fitting environment to the celebrated ancient temple of Venus at Paphos, near the western end.

The productions of Cyprus are wheat, barley, cotton, tobacco, carobs, olives, and grapes, from which are made raisins, as well as a strong wine once more appreciated in Europe than it seems to be now. Coarse silk is produced and woven. Besides salt, the most important mineral is copper, which indeed has its name from or perhaps gave it to this island. Sheep and goats are largely reared, the latter accused of a share in the destruction of the forests. In spite of

all disadvantages, and of a backward state of agriculture, the prosperity of Cyprus has steadily increased since we took it over, and its revenue would now have shown a clear balance of profit if it were not burdened by an annual payment of nearly £93,000 to the power that half-ruined it, which on such terms might well be glad to get rid of its ill-managed possession. One legacy it left is swampy fever-breeding spots, which, till they were quartered in better-chosen sites, sapped the health of our unseasoned young soldiers under the beautiful mountain scenery for which Cyprus is famed.

The former capital was Famagusta, on the eastern bay, once renowned for its rich merchants, but the Turks allowed the harbour to silt up, so that it is now a scene of dilapidated fortifications and numerous



abandoned churches, the chief buildings being the shell of the Venetian palace, the fourteenth-century cathedral degraded into a mosque, and the citadel, still showing the Lion of St. Mark, that is the main scene of Shakespeare's great tragedy. The best roadsteads are at Larnaca and Limasol on the south coast, and a port for small craft has been made at Kyrenia on the north side. From the now improved harbour of Famagusta a railway runs to the chief town and seat of the Government, Nicosia, below the Pentedactylon range, a place that is said to have once had three hundred Christian churches among its Oriental bazaars and tortuous alleys; and here still appears a striking medley of old and new, of Eastern and Western architecture, matching the motley character of the people, whom Mr.

W. H. Mallock depicts as forming dissolving views in the streets. "The brown, brigand-like shepherd, with the breath about him of the plains and of the mountains; the old majestic Turk, with his long robes trimmed with fur; the lean Greek priest with his unshorn, dangling hair, followed by a bevy of boys with garlands for some saint's shrine; buxom Armenian ladies, with bursting velvet bodices and heart-shaped silver buckles; the muleteer on his mule, with long lance-like goad; and again, strangest of all, the gliding Turkish women, veiled from head to foot in their flowing yashmaks." To which types must be added the British official in his sober tweeds, the British soldier in his familiar uniform, and here and there the British tourist taking a secure peep at the East.

## ARMENIA AND KURDISTAN

These homes of mankind seem so dovetailed into one another that they can hardly be surveyed apart, though jointly inhabited by inveterate enemies, sprung from different stocks. Armenia is now a name denoting a nation rather than the country, which, an Asian Poland, has been divided between the three neighbouring powers: Turkey, Russia, and Persia; and the fate of its people might be compared to that of the Jews, as well as of the Poles. This people, of Iranian origin, believe themselves to be descended from Haik, a grandson of Japhet, who had not far to wander from Noah's first settlement after the Deluge; and their own name for the country is Hayastan. The nation comes into historical light centuries before Christ, when it is seen overpowered by Alexander and other conquerors, then recovering an independence defended by its king Tigranes, son-in-law of Mithridates, against Pompey and Lucullus. Early in our era it accepted Christianity, and became a doughty champion of the faith among surrounding unbelievers. Its palmy time seems to have been under the Bagratian dynasty, who claimed descent from King David, and are

still represented among the Russian nobility. Their kingdom was submerged in the flood of Moslem conquest sweeping towards Constantinople; the last nominal king died in exile at the end of the fourteenth century. For long the Armenians have been an oppressed dependent people, held together by their religion, and by their language, akin to Persian, an obsolete form of which is preserved in their sacred and other ancient writings; yet, like the Jews, they have often been fain for ordinary intercourse to adopt or to borrow from the tongue of those around them.

The creed which makes the strongest bond of Armenian national life is an independent version of the Christian faith, which they refer to their patron saint Gregory the Illuminator. Differing from the Greek Church mainly on the Monophysitic controversy decided by the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451), it holds that there is only one nature in Christ, and that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father alone. In addition to this heresy, the Armenian Church keeps various peculiarities of doctrine and discipline, not so alien to Greek

Christianity as to European Protestantism. It has a married priesthood, but from its celibate monks is chosen the episcopal hierarchy, culminating in the Catholicos, an imposing array of patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops, many of whom are mere titular prelates like the dignitaries of the Papal Court. As in the case of the Grand Lama, it appears that the subordinate patriarchs sometimes show a disposition to question the supremacy of the Catholicos.

- One schism, indeed, mars the unity of Armenianism. A considerable minority, including most of the wealthy and intelligent Armenians settled at Constantinople, have attached themselves to the Latin Church, while retaining their own rites and traditions, and their Patriarch at Constantinople is in communion with Rome, which has vainly courted the allegiance of the main body. A branch of this schismatic Church, settled at a monastery on the Venetian island of San Lazzaro, did good service to Armenianism by treasuring and publishing its ancient documents, one of which, it may be remembered, Lord Byron amused himself by helping to translate. The Armenian Bible includes several apocryphal scriptures not accepted by the Catholic Church; and some of the monasteries contain a collection of old manuscripts which might throw light on Christian origins, if they were not in the hands of such incompetent and superstitious scholars as the native clergy usually are, nor much distinguished for practical piety, though in this respect, it is said, the upper ranks of the priesthood set a better example. Before leaving the subject of religion, it should be mentioned that a certain number of Armenians have been converted to Protestantism by the diligent labour of missionaries, chiefly American, who find the spiritual state of the native Christians far from satisfactory, while some of their own professed disciples seem too much concerned with sponging on Western charity. It has been said that the ill-will between Turk and Christian here is faint compared with that of differently professing Christians to each other; but of late all Armenians seem to have been drawn

together by the cruel persecution attending a revival of their national aspirations.

Estimates of this people, driven and dispersed as it has long been, must be vague; but it is believed that before the latest wholesale massacre they had dwindled to between two and three millions at the most, not half of them remaining in their native land, the larger proportion under Turkish rule, the rest, with the exception of some tens of thousands in Persia, being Russian subjects. In European Turkey, notably at Constantinople, had settled nearly a tenth part of the whole nation, and a smaller number are found in other cities of the East and even of the West, where they have often gained wealth by their keen activity as traders and usurers. Though Armenia has no coast-line of its own, Turkish steamers were often run by Armenian owners and manned by Armenian crews. An Armenian in Eastern commerce bears much the same reputation as the Jew in Europe, cunning frugality and patient industry having been forced upon them both by their persecuted condition among masters inferior in all but strength; and the Armenians, as the Jews, are distinguished by liberality towards the less prosperous members of their race. At home, where their main occupation is husbandry, and where only here and there do they form a majority of the inhabitants, they have been ground down into such an abject state that travellers were apt to praise the well-mannered Osmanli Turk above these poor Christians whom he forced to cheatery by hectoring and robbery. Among the Turks they have learned to keep their women in a certain seclusion; and still more careful were they to hide any signs of wealth acquired by the laborious toil in which they gave a lesson to their masters. As might be expected, dirt, ignorance, timidity, and superstition are the main characteristics of Armenian life that strike a stranger's eye; yet there is a promise of better things in the persistency with which they have so long clung to their Christian fellow-citizenship among alien tyrants, who kept pressing in among them, while they themselves have straggled over into neighbouring lands,

searching for the peaceful welfare denied them at home. Mr. H. F. B. Lynch, author of one of the latest and largest books on Armenia, inclines to a more favourable view of the national character, especially insisting on its quality of "grit".

To define a country which has no political existence is almost as difficult as to enumerate a scattered people. At one time Armenia's bounds were wider, but now the name is taken for an area, about equal to that of England, in the north-eastern corner behind Asia Minor, between the Caucasus and the Taurus systems, drained by the upper waters of the Aras and the Euphrates, which latter stream made the ancient division of Armenia Major and Armenia Minor. Its surface is mainly a continuation of the Persian table-land, here also enclosed by arcs of mountain-wall within which the high plains are corrugated by volcanic elevations and deep-cut watercourses.

The altitude of this plateau, often above any British mountain-top, gives it a very severe winter climate, followed by extreme summer heat. Deep snow lies long in winter upon heights whose hollows may at another season be pestilential fever traps; and the rough mountain passes make travelling difficult or even perilous for much of the year. Well-watered basins are fertile in grain and fruit, while the poorer slopes support goats and big-tailed sheep, herded rather by intruding Kurds or other Mohammedans than by the agricultural Armenian peasantry. Wood is in many parts so rare, that for fuel the inhabitants may be reduced to a preparation of dung mixed with chopped straw and dried on the flat tops of their houses, which even in cities are often half-burrowed underground or backed against a slope and covered up on all sides but one, the roof scarcely raised above the surface, so that in the deep snow one may walk over the top of a house without knowing it. In such a semi-subterranean abode, sometimes of great extent, an Armenian family will spend the winter chiefly in the largest apartment, used as a stable, where the breath of the cattle helps to keep them warm. Even

a rich man's house the cows and horses

are as much at home as the pig in an Irish hovel; and it is the curious custom in this part of the world to keep a fat sheep, sometimes a young boar, in every stable as a companion for horses. Mules and asses are much used as beasts of burden, also camels, that in winter must be fed by hand, but in summer pick up a livelihood from the coarse, prickly herbage beside the rough roads, on which they spend more time in browsing than in getting forward.

Even in richer spots an Armenian village commonly wears a wretched look; and the inhabitants match their houses. "Their usual dress is a sort of long, wadded, cotton dressing-gown, slit up at the sides so as to make it form an apron behind and before, old baggy-kneed trousers, very short and dirty, a fez, or oftener a bare, shaggy, uncombed head, and, to finish all, feet thrust into slippers the heels of which are nowhere." So reports Mr. H. C. Barkley, who describes the ground about the houses as "poached up into a lake of black mud some 18 inches deep; and often the only dry spot in the villages is the large manure-heap, whereon squat the elders of the community, surrounded by children, dogs, cows, sheep, and ponies, all looking more than half-starved". Another visitor to such homes observed that "if a farmer wished to pay a visit to a neighbour across the way, he simply tucked up his dressing-gown under his arm-pits, took off his slippers, broad trousers, and stockings, then, committing himself to Providence, he would wade through the dirt to his friend's house".

As in most parts of Asiatic Turkey, the domestic animals are stunted both by a hard life and by want of care in breeding; and in general Armenia is not well off even for wild beasts, though these include several species, from big bears to the tiny lemming. It is richer in birds of many kinds. Mr. R. Curzon declares that he has seen the country coloured for miles by countless flocks of a kind of red goose, and whitened with great patches of the grey goose; then he makes a sportsman's mouth water by enumeration of herons, bustards, cranes, quails "thick as flies", partridges, and



A Typical Armenian Village

Even in the richer spots an Armenian village commonly wears a wretched look; and the inhabitants match their houses.

other game preyed on by falcons and hawks; while the stork builds among the chimneys of the houses, with the irrepressible sparrow quartered upon his roomy nest as a thievish lodger. The mountain streams swarm with trout and other fish, though some of the deep lakes seem to be lifeless. Among the poverty of mountain vegetation the same writer notes some remarkably beautiful flowers, such as one called in Turkish "Seven Brothers' Blood" (*Philippia coccinea*), which grows like a lily, with bloom, stalk, and all resembling crimson velvet, as a parasite upon wormwood, often in company with a kind of thistle bearing honey-suckle-like flowers all up its stem. Another plant found here (*Anthemis rosea*) should be very useful in Armenia, as, when reduced to powder, this has the property of killing or stupefying fleas and other vermin that

swarm upon the fierce dogs, for which strangers often wish extermination.

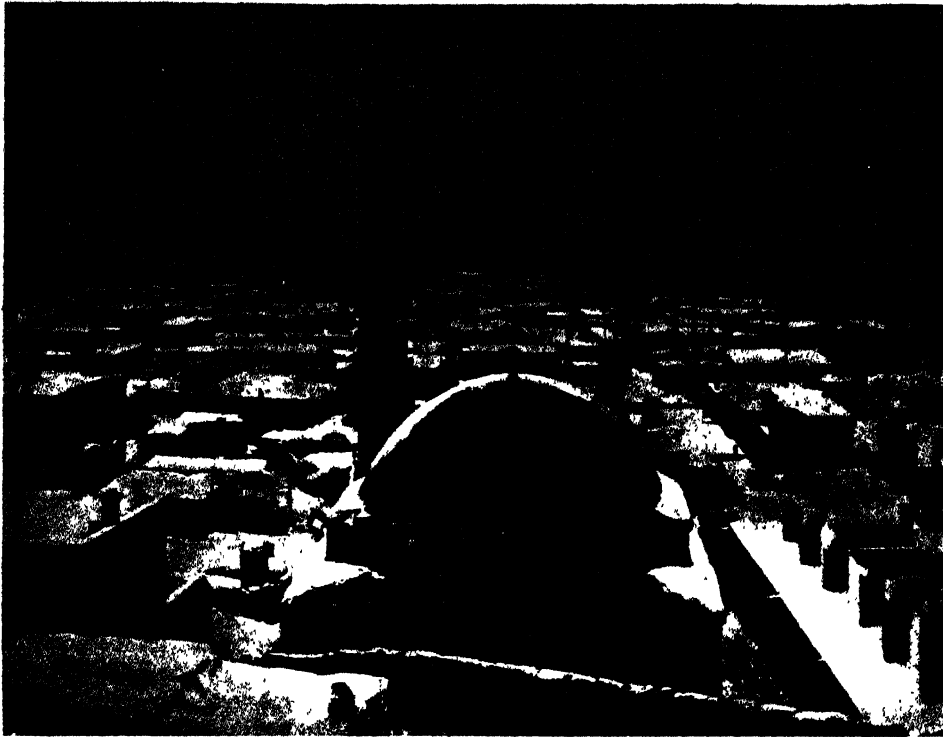
Of Armenian customs it is not easy to speak, modified as they are to some extent by alien laws and surroundings. The centre of the national life came to be in Russian territory, by the valley of the Aras, that, in its course to the Caspian, has hollowed out the deepest depression of these highlands. Here, below the huge volcanic mass of Ala Goz, to the north of Mount Ararat, the Catholicos has his Vatican at Etchmiadzin, in what claims to be the oldest of monasteries. As in Russia, monasteries serve as palaces for Armenian prelates; and this one includes within its *enceinte* of a mile quarters for guests as well as monks, and for the clerical dignitaries who attend on the Catholicos, also a seminary for young men, and a bazaar for dealing in

the produce of the monastery lands, in short a little town, the nucleus of which is the cathedral believed to have been founded by St. Gregory, the "Illuminator" of Armenia, all dominated by Mount Ararat, "a great white jewel set up against a sheet of dazzling blue". There is an ancient library of books and manuscripts which might repay examination; but what the monks have treasured more is their collection of priceless relics, such as a fragment of Noah's Ark, the head of the spear that pierced Christ's side, and a mummied hand supposed to be that of St. Gregory, which still acts in the consecration of the patriarch. The superstitious features of Armenian religion are much in the foreground here; but a printing-press has been at work as a regenerating influence, and Mr. Lynch declares that the transformation of this vast cloister "from a residence of ignorant monks into a seat of education, the home of cultured men, is proceeding year by year", fostered by endowments from wealthy Armenians in all parts of the world. The old capital of Armenia, that with the name Vagarshapat stood here at the date of its conversion, has dwindled into a village; but of Ani, a later capital on a tributary of the Aras, towards Kars, extensive and well-preserved remains, all the more striking from the present desolation in which they stand hidden, bear witness to the magnificence overthrown by Turkish invasion.

Erivan, a little to the east of Etchmiadzin, seemed to be supplanted by Alexandropol as the citadel of Russian Armenia. Lower down the valley of the Aras, Nakhitchevan contests with Erivan a claim to be Noah's first settlement after the flood, and the strong wine of this region is held to explain a weakness recorded of that venerable sire. Keeping up the course of the Aras we pass from what was Russian into Turkish Armenia, soon recognized not by any change in the mountainous country, but by the greater misery of the people, winnowed out by devastating massacres and chronic oppression, then further impoverished in the vicissitudes of a long struggle hereabouts between Russian and Turkish armies during the early stages of the war. Erzeroum, the capital

of this province, shows the same mixture of races as at Erivan. Mohammedans here predominating, and the Armenian Christians belong rather to the Latin communion than to their own independent church. The city, of some 40,000 inhabitants, stands upon irregular ground at the foot of bold, snow-clad mountains, in a plain several thousand feet above the sea, a situation which gives it a very severe winter climate. Its most striking buildings are the Pasha's palace, and the mosques, tombs, and colleges of Moslem devotion. Many of the houses being wholly or partly subterranean, it appears when snowed up in winter "like a great rabbit-warren", out of which rise the antiquated fortifications of the town and its citadel. From it run roads eastward to Persia, to Georgia by Kars, over the northern watershed to Trebizond on the Black Sea, and westward to Erzingan.

We are now in the basin of the Euphrates, whose western branch, as it is called, though northern would be a more fitting name, flows from above Erzeroum to Erzingan, cradle of Armenian Christianity, a once flourishing city that came down to be little more than a Turkish military station, displaying its fortifications on a flat which is "a dust-heap in summer and a mud-lake in winter". The surrounding plain is ruined by stones poured over it by the snow-swollen torrents from mountain masses, on whose sides may bloom little oases of habitation; but more often the jagged heights, riven and broken by earthquakes, show no green thing but stunted pines fringing their abysses, above which lonely convents and villages are perched like eagles' nests, out of the way of robber incursions that help the forces of nature to keep this region desolate. Through such stern highlands the "Black Water", as it is locally called, forces its way to the edge of Turkish Armenia, then turns abruptly south, at the south-west corner of the province taking in the Murad or eastern branch, that has flowed parallel with it from the mountain-wall of Russian Armenia. Between these two streams the Aras takes its rise, running in the other direction; and the



Erzeroum: a winter panorama from the Citadel

Owing to its latitude and elevation (more than 6000 feet above sea-level) Erzeroum has a very severe climatic, extremely cold in winter and oppressively hot in summer; but, on the whole, it is a healthy spot.

involved course of the rivers here gives almost as clear an idea of how the ground is wrinkled by mountain chains as any representation of their relief. On the right bank of the western Euphrates, Armenia Minor made the Turkish province of Sivas, whose capital of the same name stands on the Irmak, the ancient Halys, separated by high mountains from the Euphrates basin.

Among these stern mountains lie plains enriched by Armenian industry, and towns which are only in part of Armenian population. Several of them became scenes of riotous slaughter in the massacres that in our time repeated such atrocities as have been too frequent where Christians lived helpless among fanatical Islamites, but now almost within the hearing of Christendom, its ears and eyes sharpened by closer inter-

course with the East, and especially through reports of Protestant missionaries labouring to elevate the poor Christianity of this people. Not far from where the Euphrates turns southward to break through under the colossal crests of the Taurus, Eghin is the "most surprising of romantic little cities, buried amid its surrounding mountains in a sea of verdure, which yet arises terrace upon terrace high up one mountain slope", with flights of stairs for streets like an Asian Clovelly, distinguished by von Moltke as the most grand and beautiful place he saw in this region. Farther down, on a wide plain opening from the right bank, is Malatia, which Professor Rendel Harris for his part judged the most beautiful city he saw in Asiatic Turkey, one of 30,000 people, also buried in gardens.

This place had also been noted to Europe by von Moltke's letters from it when he served as neglected adviser to the Turkish army, defeated by Ibrahim Pasha on the borders of Armenia.

Where the mountains close in again begins the formidable series of cataracts, three hundred in number, by which over a reach of 60 miles the river descends through deep gorges to the Mesopotamian plains, a passage made by von Moltke on a whirling raft.

"These rapids are always at the point where a little torrent falls into the stream. In the course of ages larger or smaller fragments of rock have fallen from the gorge, forming at the torrent's mouth a little promontory that narrows the main channel; then also large boulders have often rolled into the river-bed, emerging when the water is low, but in flood covered by the waves, to which they oppose an invincible resistance. The river, restricted and thrown out of its course, flings itself against these obstacles, breaks into a spreading mass above them, and beyond into a whirling and foaming current. . . . Hardly has such a cataract been passed than one already hears the roaring of the next."

Returning upwards on the left bank, to the south of the Eastern Euphrates, we find another fertile plain which has Kharput as its chief town, while the official centre is at Mezreh, a smaller place not far off, that along with a cluster of neighbouring villages makes up a population of 50,000. Near the confluence of the two branches are lead and silver mines, worked at various disadvantages in want of fuel, of transport, and of machinery, besides the blight of bad government. The colouring of the rocks in the

mountain gorges often shows them to be full of minerals. At Arghana, by the Tigris, here flowing not far from the Euphrates, are the richest copper-mines of Turkey in Asia, the output of which is restricted by the same hindrances. Salt and sulphur, alum and naphtha are got from the volcanic mountains around Lake Van, to the east, between which and the Euphrates lies another fertile valley about Mush, the "Cashmere of Armenia", in part spoiled by swamps, and girdled by the fastnesses of the Kurds, that have been to the helpless Armenians what wolves are to sheep.

Near Lake Van, the largest in Turkish territory, rises what is sometimes styled the eastern branch of the Tigris, that has another source close to the stream of the united Euphrates, which it is to join far below on the Mesopotamian plain. Lake Van is a closed basin, nearly 80 miles long, 5600 feet above the sea, dammed up by a wall of black lava, shut in by snow-clad and volcanic mountains, which on the east side separate it from the Persian Lake Urumia, and to the north form the ancient Niphates, where Milton makes Satan alight on his baleful mission. The water is thickly impregnated with borax rather than salt, which makes it easier to swim in; it has the effect of staining the hair and may prove to have curative properties. Near the south-eastern corner stands the ancient city of Van, with its doubtful memories of Semiramis, and mysterious tombs and inscriptions on the bold cliff from which its citadel looks over a stretch of gardens and poplar avenues between the town and the lake.<sup>1</sup> This was once a centre of Armenian culture, and,

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Bishop compares the southern shores of Lake Van to the Italian Riviera. "Art aids nature, and there are grand old monasteries on promontories, and Kurdish castles on heights, and flashing streams and booming torrents are bridged by picturesque pointed arches. There are 150 monasteries in this region, and the towers of St. George, at the mountain village of Narek, high on a rocky spur, above one of the most beautiful of the many wooded valleys which descend upon the lake of Van, lend an air of mediæval romance to a scene as fair as nature can make it. Nearly all the romantic valleys opening on the lake are adorned with one or more villages, with houses tier above tier in their rocky clefts, and terrace below terrace of exquisite culti-

vation below, of the vivid velvety green of winter wheat. Their terraces often 'hang' above green sward and noble walnut trees. Occasionally the villages are built at the foot of the mountains, on small plateaux above steep-sided bays, and are embosomed in trees glowing with colour, from canary-yellow to crimson and madder-red, and mountains snow-crested and forest-skirted tower over all."

Mr. Lynch, who also extols the "ineffable beauty of Lake Van", and Dr. Oswald have mapped out the extinct volcano Nimrud Dagh at the west end (nearly 10,000 feet), and the still higher Sipan Dagh above the north shore. The great Nimrud crater is nearly 5 miles in diameter, half-filled by a deep lake



The old Capital of Kurdistan: a view of Bitlis, showing the fortress ruins

before the massacres, the most Armenian part of Turkish Armenia. Of its population (about 30,000) the majority were Armenians reduced to poverty by earthquakes and by the depredations of their Kurdish neighbours. Kurds are in the majority at Bitlis, to the other side of the lake, which Mrs. Bishop calls the most romantically-situated place she had seen in Western Asia, where gigantic ruins of its fortress look down from precipitous heights on the rushing cataracts of the Eastern Tigris, flowing from a summit of the Taurus. The population, about equal to that of Van, is fiercely fanatical and turbulent; but here, as at Van and at Kharput, a settlement of American missionaries has striven to raise the Christians debased by ignorance and persecution, rather than to convert the Kurds, who make a virtue of despoiling these infidels.

Bitlis is the old capital and northern gate

of Kurdistan, a name as hard to limit as Armenia, with which it seems inextricably confused. It may be roughly defined as the mountain region south of the Armenian table-land, on the west side of Persia; but the wandering Kurds, too, fierce and lawless as when Xenophon's army fought its way through these *Carduchi* to the sea, have pushed beyond their old boundaries, and are found mixed up with the Armenians, and even within the borders of Transcaucasia and Anatolia. For the most part they are Mohammedans, whose strongest point of religion is hatred for all other creeds; but their women go unveiled, nor is this the only respect in which they show themselves independent of Moslem custom; and in warm weather they make much more bold exposure of themselves in river bathing, whereas, among their more modest Arab neighbours even the men keep their faces swathed up



## The World of To-day

as a point of propriety. To the women falls most of the hard work, yet they have not such an inferior position as in Persian harems; and a Kurd at least holds his wife as equal in value to his best horse. The industry of the tribesmen is pastoral rather than agricultural, so that in this respect they and their more peaceful neighbours reverse the parts of Cain and Abel. For centuries the Armenians have been harried and plundered by the wild Kurds, whom the Turks now made fitful efforts to restrain, then again used them as agents of oppression against the Christians. The Armenians paid a tax in lieu of military service, but the Kurds supplied the Turkish army with irregular cavalry, auxiliaries who seem to have had a chief hand in the recent Armenian massacres. The same kind of oppression has been chronic, with more or less intensity, the Kurds pushing their ravages almost up to the walls of Erzeroum and Erzingan, while southward they are checked by the Bedouins, foemen more of their own temper.

The swaggering Kurds are better able to ruin than to build towns; their homes are filthy hovels, often half below ground, as in the days of Xenophon, or smoke-begrimed goat's-hair tents, unless where some chief has built himself a robber's nest on a rocky eyrie, under protection of which may be found orchards and fields of grain, grass, flax. Sometimes their villages stand in tiers, close-packed upon steep slopes, so that each roof makes a yard for its neighbour above. Their best manufactures are weapons and carpets woven from the wool of their goats; and they also contrive to provide themselves with clothes of wool, cotton, and even silk, as with leather and pottery. One of their favourite industries has been smuggling tobacco from Persia, in infringement of the Turkish *régie* monopoly. Though some of them still carry long lances and heavy clubs, or maces, for the most part they get cast-off Russian or German rifles, whereas the timid Armenians were either unarmed or had only a few unserviceable guns to guard their villages and the mountain sheepfolds that must often be watched all night in dread of frequent raids from

those bad neighbours. In our century there was one Kurdish chief who could raise an army of 20,000 horse, and defy all law from a cave of Adullam, recruited by any spirits at odds with honesty and order.

The two races sometimes exchange their usual occupations; then such Kurds as do settle down to tillage seem to degenerate from the savage virtues that thrive among more or less independent hill tribes, whose fierceness is least tamed on the mountainous debatable land along the Persian and Turkish frontier, and in the inaccessible Dersim highlands of the Euphrates. Those admitted to their courteous hospitality dwell on the picturesque features of the country and of its haughty chieftains, whose costume in one district is described as a pointed silk cap with gay scarfs wound about it, a silk tunic belted by a sash about a white linen shirt with sleeves hanging down in points a yard long, over this again a thick felt jacket that serves as armour, then baggy white trousers drawn in at the ankle, over socks of coloured wool and pointed slippers of red leather or embroidered cloth. Well-filled cartridge-cases are worn across the breast, and they lavish silver and even jewels on the ornamentation of their weapons. Secure travellers in the haunts of these mountain dandies have found other points for admiration in their courage, hardihood, haughty frankness, and family morals; but by those who have to live near them they are regarded as Roderick Dhu or Rob Roy were by lowland farmers, with a dread and resentment here exasperated through religious feeling. The Kurds, indeed, may make much the same excuse as Gaelic blackmailers, for they seem to be the original inhabitants of the highlands where once more they spread out to claim their own with the strong hand. Not that the Armenians can be called lowlanders, their country being characteristically a lofty tableland, on which are dotted peaks rising as high as 13,000 feet; but the Kurds belong rather to that more compact mass of mountains on the south-east, from which the Taurus runs off into Asia Minor. All the tribes of this stock are believed to number

some three millions, not half of whom inhabit what is commonly called Kurdistan.

In the border mountains of Persia, too, the Kurds prove troublesome neighbours, who in 1880 ravaged the north-western corner of that country, and still make travelling through their wild passes an adventurous exploit. Before the Russian conquest of Turkestan, Kurdish tribes were settled in Khorassan to defend its frontiers against the wild Turkomans, but the effect was much as if wolves had been employed for sheep-dogs. No religious sympathy restrains the Kurds on this side, for they are Sunnites, between whom and the Persian Shiah's glows a hatred as bitter as, or more so than between Christian and Moslem. More than one section of the Kurdish stock, indeed, cherishes a peculiar religion. Yezidis is the name of one such body which has its seat in certain mountain districts about the Tigris. Their faith appears to be a variety of Mohammedanism, or perhaps of Persian sun-worship, which, among other heresies, treats Satan as a power worth venerating, a tenet that has earned them the title of "devil worshippers", and brought upon them fierce opprobrium from all sides. The most devilish point of this religion appears to be that its hereditary head is much in the way of getting murdered by his heir: "the priest who slew the slayer, and shall himself be slain". They, for their part, have been harried, in some parts almost exterminated, by the Turks; yet by some unprejudiced witnesses these sectaries of the devil are declared to be more friendly, peaceful, and industrious than any other Kurds; and they may at least claim the merit of having steadfastly endured cruel persecution. "By their fruits ye shall know them" is a text that has little honour in Oriental orthodoxy. Another sect, strong among mountaineers to the south of Kurdistan, is the Ali-Ilahists, sometimes called "Davidites" from their veneration for King David, who are believed to have a Jewish basis for their hybrid faith, eked out by Moslem and Christian influences; they have even been identified with the lost Ten Tribes. Then the largest and most widely-spread body of sectaries is

the Kizil Bashis, or "Red Heads", who hold together in certain parts of Persia and Asia Minor, outwardly Mohammedans, but cherishing peculiar tenets and observances, which they do not willingly communicate to strangers. Calling themselves "Old Turks", they are believed to be of a Turki stock, who, perhaps, have preserved some features of paganism coloured by the Shiah faith; they are said to be less bitterly hostile to Christians than the more orthodox tribes. What with back-waters of Christianity and of Islamism, in the hills about the Tigris could be enumerated some two dozen forms of hostile fanaticism.

The characteristic attitude of Kurds being "agin the Government", they are found most fiercely Sunnite on the Persian side, while to the west many of them cherish the mysterious faith associated with the name Kizil Bashis. This is the case with the tribes who have their seat in the Dersim, a mass of impenetrable mountains in the fork of the two Euphrates branches, fortified by bastions of black rock and glacier moats, with passes 9000 feet above the sea as the only gates to a natural stronghold, round which the Turks have built a ring of forts; but when some years ago a military force entered it to collect tribute, not a man came back to tell how the Kurds crushed them with rocks from overhanging crags, as the followers of Bruce or the Tyrolese peasants defended their native bulwarks. The tamest Kurds are, of course, those who have given away their independence by settling on accessible plains. On the other hand, the usually peaceful Armenians have here and there in secluded nooks preserved that warlike spirit which of old made them a formidable power. About the Cilician end of the Taurus an Armenian state for a time held more than its own among the general welter of Moslem conquest. As a remnant of this, perhaps, Zeitoun, in a valley of the Taurus behind the Levantine plains, to the north of Marash, remained a notable Armenian stronghold up to our own day. This "town of olives" has some dozen of score thousand people, who, raised above the fate of their oppressed kinsmen, long

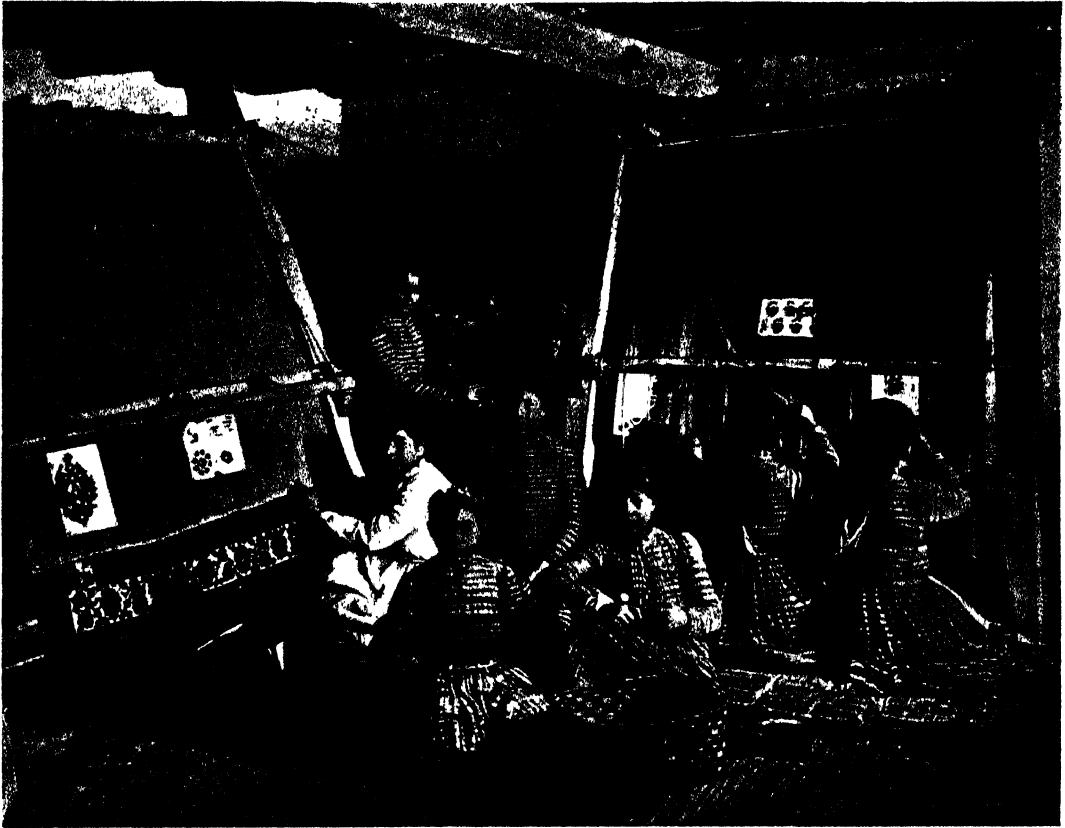
maintained a bold independence under their bishop and chiefs, making themselves, indeed, a plague to the country by Kurdish-like brigandage. The assertion of Turkish supremacy brought about a series of combats and insurrections, in one of which (1895) Zeitoun was gallantly defended against a large army, and its subdual cost the Turk perhaps as many lives as at that period made up the wholesale massacres by which the name of Armenia is sorrowfully known; but since then the Armenian inhabitants of Zeitoun fell victims to Turkish fury provoked in the Great War.

The last of those massacres was in Cilicia after the end of the War. The most sweeping of them came about in its early days, far more wholesale and sanguinary than any that took place under Abdul Hamid, or one during the revolutionary troubles of 1909, which had been mainly confined to Cilicia. In the confusion of 1915, news of it filtered to Europe, through reports of horrified American missionaries and consuls: perhaps all its atrocities will never come to light, but enough is known to justify Lord Bryce's declaration in Parliament that history records no other "crime so hideous and upon so large a scale". The breath of liberty that had stirred Turkish stagnation may well have moved the oppressed Armenians to stand up for their rights; still more probably some of them had hailed Russian victories in their country; and the Turkish Government found cause to fear hopes aroused among its most numerous and widespread body of Christian subjects. At all events, orders went out from Constantinople that Armenian discontent was to be settled once and for all by getting rid of the whole race. A few more humane governors refused to obey these instructions; some let themselves be bribed into neglect; but others carried them out with the too ready help of Kurds and fanatical Moslems. The poor people were at the best thrown into prison or driven from their homes, often with scenes of slaughter that whetted an hereditary taste for blood. Men were sent to slavery, women ravished by the persecutors, orphan children left to perish

or butchered in sheer wantonness. Respectable citizens were tortured; robbery was matter of course. In Armenia proper the Kurds had their will of these despised and detested neighbours; and all over Asia Minor knots of Armenians fell victims. The most cold-blooded horror appears to have been at Trebizond, where several thousands were taken out in boats to be sunk at sea, as in the *noyades* of the French Revolution.

At some places Armenians had arms and strength for resistance. At Van they barricaded themselves in their quarter, holding out for a month till relieved by the advancing Russians. Two or three hundred women are said to have held a pass for days, armed with rifles against Turkish cannon. A band of mountaineers in the south defended themselves still longer against a small army, to be finally rescued by a French cruiser. Others were able to escape to Caucasia, to Persia, or to Egypt. Some communities or individuals were fain to save their lives by a hasty conversion to Islam, that did not always secure them against mob violence. Unhappy women threw themselves and their children into the Euphrates or the Tigris to escape such cruelties as drove many mad; others were hurled over precipices by brutal guards. The survivors were hustled from their homes, to be deported southwards to unhealthy and ill-peopled districts, where many died of sickness or starvation, not a few having perished by the way, on which no care was taken to protect these exiles from robber bands.

Thus a large part of the Armenian nation was wiped out, the deaths being put at nearly a million in a few weeks. Some German Red Cross nurses who witnessed such miseries are said to have been overcome by pity and disgust; but the German consuls, that might have interfered with effect, appear to have done nothing; German officers looked coolly on; and the German Government, though appealed to by the United States, would not or could not restrain its ferocious ally. All that blood, with so much more, is on the head of the Christian Kaiser, who so glibly invoked "the German god" to rule the storm of



Armenian Girls weaving Carpets on Hand-loom, Van

bloodthirsty passion he had let loose on the world. His people, ill-informed of the truth or blinded by rage, may some day take shame to themselves for the callous indifference with which the Armenian massacres were regarded in Germany.

At that date should have been finished, or well advanced, the great Baghdad railway line, that, under German auspices, was to regenerate a fallen land by opening it to the commerce and *Kultur* of a nation which had already taken an honourable part in the discovery of its richness in ancient monuments. Britain looked rather askance on a new road towards India in German hands; but she had in view another benefit to this region in the schemes for irrigation with which Sir William Willcocks, well known through such undertakings in Egypt, was

already at work to revive a land withered by the neglect of its Turkish masters. All useful enterprises were held up by the Great War; after which funds for the expansion of German influence may run as dry as the old canals of Mesopotamia.

By 1914 the Baghdad railway from Konia had reached the Taurus, while at the other end a section in working up the Tigris from Baghdad fell into our hands on the British occupation of Baghdad. Beyond its then unfinished tunnel through the Taurus, a little to the east of the Cilician Gates, it was in partial working and construction, as at Adana and Alexandretta. Crossing the double Amanus range, the Giaour Dag and the Kurd Dag, the route turned south to Aleppo; thence making a bend north-eastwards to pass the Euphrates by island

piers at Jerablus, taken to be the site of the Hittite capital Carchemish, one of the mightiest cities of old, long ago buried under silent mounds, the excavation of which has gone on afresh since the War under the protection of French guns. Here the rail runs some score of miles below the usual caravan road from Syria. Its line was next eastwards under the foothills of the Taurus that wall in Mesopotamia on the north, till at Nisibin, the farthest outpost of the old Roman empire, it trended south-east to reach the Tigris above Mosul and run down the river to Baghdad, thence to be continued to the Euphrates, and down it to Basra, the inland port of the united rivers.

There are several considerable cities in southern Kurdistan to be served by extension of such communications. On the hill edge of the Mesopotamian plain, Mardin, which suffered sorely in the late massacres, was before then called or exaggerated into a place of 80,000 people, a monastery near which is the seat of the Jacobite patriarch. Higher up the Tigris comes Diarbekir, which, though not quite so large, has been the capital of the Turkish province as bearing a more famous name. This junction of routes from the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, and the Persian Gulf is a place of some 40,000 people, a third of them hitherto Christians, picturesquely situated on an eminence above the river, where rise the walls and towers of its citadel and its many temples of rival religions. Besides some two dozen mosques, it has an Armenian cathedral and the churches of Nestorian and Jacobite sects, part of whom worship in communion with Rome, while Protestant missionaries have introduced another element of dissension, so that here prevails as great a mixture of creed as of blood. Amida was its ancient name, and to the Turks it is known as the "Black Amid", from the gloomy aspect of the basaltic rocks of which its fortifications are built. It has a considerable industry, chiefly in leather-making, by help of the gall-nuts that are one of the most notable productions of this district; and the position of Diarbekir makes it a centre of trade, which would be flourishing

under any better government. Mr. D. Fraser's account of it, in his *Short Cut to India*, is what has to be said of too many a place in this most distressful country.

"The city is placed on the edge of a broad plateau overlooking the silver Tigris on a wide bank of dazzling sand. Immediately below the eastern walls there is a sheer drop of several hundred feet. From the river the town looks unspeakably majestic, set square and dauntless on the cliff above. From the city walls the scene is no less impressive, for the broad flat below, held within a curve of the sparkling river, is a mass of every shade of green conceivable by the human retina. Pale patches of budding vegetation are surrounded by rows of tall and dark poplars; fields of brightest emerald corn are flanked by thickets of rich-hued mulberry bushes; walnut trees, peach trees, apple trees, border beds of the lowlier fruits of the earth; all the strength and youth and brightness of the spring seem here combined to sing in one joyful key. These well-ordered gardens speak of peace and prosperity, the mighty walls above of well-guarded security. But the gold is false, despite the glitter. Nature's colouring may be perfect, and man's handiwork flattering to the eye, where all the while lurks a ghastly skeleton. Seeming and reality are here wide apart as the poles, for in Diarbekir Oriental misgovernment is at its height, and within its walls there is neither justice for the righteous nor protection for the weak. . . . In 1750 its population was said to have numbered 400,000, where to-day dwell no more than a tenth of that number."

Diarbekir would have been on the first proposed route of the Baghdad railway, from Angora over the Taurus into the Kurdish valleys. On the adopted line from Aleppo, a short branch was designed leading north from Haran, which boasts the possession of Rebecca's Well and an alleged tomb of Abraham, to Urfa on the caravan road, furthest conquest of the Crusaders, in early Christian days renowned as Edessa, whose king is said to have written to Christ a letter that figures among the Apocryphal Gospels, and to have been miraculously healed by an apostle whom legend makes the founder of the so-called Nestorian Church. Urfa claims moreover to be at

once the home of Job and that "Ur of the Chaldees" from which Abraham set forth to the land of Canaan. A beautiful mosque upon the banks of a sacred pool, swarming with revered carp, bears the patriarch's name, revered by Moslem as well as Jew; the legend goes that on this spot Abraham made ready to sacrifice his son. This was in our day a town of 40,000 people, even after thousands of Armenians were killed here in 1895, more than a thousand being burned or smoked to death in their own church. Centuries before Abraham's time it is now shown to have been capital of a great kingdom, whose relics, Professor Sayce tells us, disclose such modern features as a college for women and a postal service.

All this hill country is thick set with traditionally sacred sites, and monuments of rival creeds, its people firmly believing that Noah's Ark was stranded not on Ararat but on a mountain of southern Kurdistan, which also exhibits the patriarch's grave. Where the cliffs here and there show carved with memorials of Assyrian kings, or honey-combed with cave dwellings, on precipitous points are perched many old Christian monasteries and churches, some abandoned, some holding out precariously against the raids of their lawless neighbours; and volcanic heights enclose labyrinths of fissured black lava, which have in our time served as fastnesses for the oppressed Armenians.

This account of a most complicated area has to leave its future "on the knees of the gods", in this case represented by the Allied Powers that have undertaken to deliver it from its late tyrant, but are not prepared with a Hercules for the labour of upraising a people so utterly crushed. In the north, what was Russian Armenia made haste to set itself up as a republic, after the model of its neighbours. To the south, Nestorians and Jacobites have been claiming as heirs of the old Assyrian empire to form an independent state between Armenia and Mesopotamia. The Allied plan for the reconstitution of Armenia, if its boundaries could be defined, was to put it in charge of a protectorate, for which it had been hoped that a mandate would be accepted

by the United States, whose people have shown a strong interest in missionary and philanthropic work here. But the Americans hung back from assuming any such responsibility; nor has any other competent power shown an ambition to undertake the thankless and dubious task of making lions lie down in peace with lambs, who for their part, so far as can be judged from their scattered bleatings, are not all of one mind as to the shepherding that will best please them. Interference here, to be sure, has proved doubly difficult through the want of access by sea to a country bristling with obstacles to military movements. Since the British garrison evacuated Batoum, it looks as if Armenia were cut off from succour amid the mad welter of quarrel engendered by the War and the Russian Revolution. Ex-President Wilson was asked to arbitrate in defining the Armenian boundaries, which reviving patriotic aspirations would push well up into Transcaucasia and westward into Anatolia so as to take in Cilicia, the Anti-Taurus, the head-waters of the Kizil Irmak, and the Turkish province of Trebizond on the Black Sea, giving Armenia the seaboard it lacked in its downtrodden plight. Pressed between Russian Bolshevism and the forces of Kemal, it was fain to adopt a Soviet form of government; but the permanence of any new institutions here seems as precarious as the independence granted, on paper, to an Armenian state, which the Turks would limit to the ex-Russian province around Erivan. Armenia seems not unpromising soil for a republic, as populated by peasants so democratic in spirit that even their bishops are chosen by election, whereas Georgia had its aristocracy of petty princes, while Kurds and Tartars looked up to their khans and beys. But Armenia's weakness is its lying more exposed to Turkish domination, which surged back with the old brutalities of slaughter, when the Allies withdrew, leaving this region in want of firm authority, of arms, and of sustenance for the refugees that by hundreds of thousands had fled from their ravaged homes to seek an ark of asylum around Mount Ararat.

# The World of To-day

## SYRIA AND PALESTINE

The modern Syria is formed by a strip of mountainous land that separates the coast of the Levant from upland plains sloping down towards inland river courses, north and south, beyond which other heights border the deserts of Mesopotamia and Arabia. In the north this elevated strip is some 150 miles broad; in the south, Palestine contracts to 50 miles or so between the sea and the deep Jordan valley. In the centre the mountains take most definite shape as two parallel chains, the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, the former's highest points displayed 10,000 feet over the shore-line, so as powerfully to strike the imagination from far—

Sainted Lebanon,  
Whose head in wintry grandeur towers  
And whitens with eternal sleet;  
While summer, in a vale of flowers,  
Is sleeping rosy at his feet.

It has been conjectured that the name Syria was a synonym of the flowers that still bloom on its plains. An older name is Phœnicia, for part of this coast was the home of the first great trading and colonizing people of the old world, that found a way even to the remote Britannic islands on which was to fall the inheritance of their enterprising spirit.

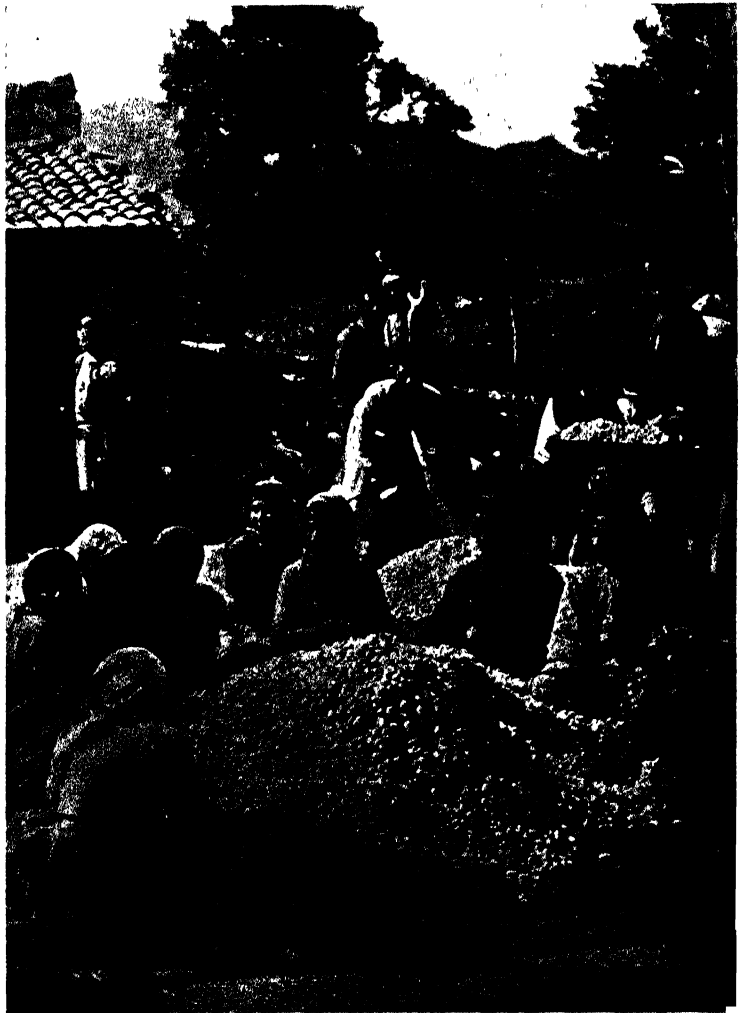
Alexandretta, already mentioned at the north end of the Syrian coast, is a small town among feverish marshes, but important as harbour for the trade of northern Mesopotamia, and likely to gain, from a branch of the Baghdad railway, what it lost through the Suez Canal. As the port of Aleppo, it was well known to mariners of old, before the Cape of Good Hope route to the East left it somewhat stranded; and a pillar some miles to the north pretends to mark the landing of that unlucky voyager, Jonah. European merchants take refuge from the climate at Beilan on the heights of the Amanus behind, through which, by the pass of the "Syrian Gates", runs a great caravan route to Aleppo, 60 miles inland, the chief commercial centre of the middle

Euphrates basin. Aleppo or Haleb was at one time the most flourishing city in Turkish Asia, with a population now counted at some 200,000. In 1822 it was ruined by severe earthquakes, which have brought this advantage, that a great part of the place has been rebuilt in a better style than the cramped and squalid streets thus destroyed; but there remain, as monuments of its old dignity, the towering citadel and the solid Roman aqueduct, to contrast with its new European quarter, Azizieh. It stands on the plain of the Koik River, among gardens whose pistachio-nuts are renowned, as is also the silk production of the neighbourhood; and Aleppo has still a considerable industry in ornamental fabrics, besides its business in the transit of coffee, gum, wool, olives, liquorice, and other wares brought by caravan routes from Mesopotamia, Arabia, and Syria, and now by a railway from Beyrout, here coming into touch with the Baghdad line, which during the war achieved its tunnelling of the Taurus and Amanus range.

The road from Alexandretta to Aleppo passes near the Lake of Antioch, to the south of which that "Queen of the East" was once a great city of over half a million people, where only some 10,000 to 20,000 live among the extensive ruin wrought to Roman and Moslem grandeur by wars as well as earthquakes. At Antioch, we know, the disciples were first called Christians; St. Peter is said to have been its first bishop; it was one of the goals of the Crusaders; and it preserves its ecclesiastical note as title for Greek, Latin, Armenian, and Nestorian patriarchs, who have now their seats elsewhere, while the remains of a noble temple of Apollo recall the religion which these Churches overthrew. The present shrunken town stands about 20 miles from the Levant, upon the Orontes, the chief river of Syria, that for most of its course runs parallel with the Lebanon, then here turns westward over the plain of Antioch.

To the south of the Orontes, on the coast, comes Latakia, one of several *Laodiceas* of the ancient world, this one erroneously identified with the site of that early Christian Church, but authentically known to us by its tobacco. Seleucus Nicator is said to have founded seven towns in honour of his mother Laodicea. This makes a southern outlet for the trade of Aleppo; but, sharing the decay of Antioch, it has become a poor place; and the arts that once flourished here are now represented by an ingenious forgery of Greek and Roman coins to be passed off upon foreigners. Southwards, 70 miles, Tripoli is another port, notable as one of the best-built towns in Syria, with 20,000 people. But of all the Syrian harbours the most flourishing is Beyrout (Beirut), farther south, a much de-Orientalized place, which comes second only to Smyrna in the commerce of the Levant. Besides its trade, it has manufactures of silk, wool, and pottery, and the whole district is much engaged in olive growing and silk-worm rearing. The city stands upon a tongue of land, with a central public square or garden and a broad main street containing the European consulates, whose officials have their homes on the green heights above, against which a fine show of colour is

made by the white buildings and red roofs rising in terraces from the blue Mediterranean. The back streets, as usual, are narrow, winding, and dirty, but a few years ago a vigorous effort to cleanse them was made by an active governor, who, braving unpopularity, had a massacre made of the troops of pariah dogs that, as at Constantinople, were allowed their unsweet will of the city. It has gas-works and other signs



Underwood & Underwood

The Silk Industry of Northern Syria: sorting the different qualities of cocoons

These women work for about fourpence a day, and are glad to get the job.



of progress to show. The population, growing on to 200,000, with Arabic as common language, is a very mixed one of Turks, Greeks, Syrians, Jews, Armenians, and Europeans, among whom the French have taken the lead, most of the trade of this coast being with Marseilles. More than half the people are Christians, this city being a base of Catholic missionary work, as also of an American mission to the motley faiths of Syria. There was a considerable congregation of Protestants; and the education provided by foreign institutions, prominent among them an American college, as well as their religious teaching, has been notably affecting also the inland folk.

From Beyrout improved roads run along the coast, and over the Lebanon to Damascus, 90 miles inland, with which great city it is also connected by a light railway. To the north of the city a pass into the Lebanon is opened by the Dog River, near whose mouth are cliffs carved with inscriptions in many languages, the latest recording Lord Allenby's victorious progress. The main Lebanon range stretches behind the coast for nearly 100 miles, forming an almost continuous ridge whose highest point is Dhor-el-Khodib (over 10,000 feet), to the south of Tripoli. A long, narrow valley, anciently known as Cœle (*hollow*) Syria, separates this from the more broken mass of the Anti-Lebanon, which rises at the southern end to over 9000 feet in the ridge of Mount Hermon. The cedars of Lebanon have almost disappeared, their fame being preserved by one wood in which a group of patriarchal trunks is fondly revered as contemporary with those from which Solomon's temple was built, and twelve huge ones are fabled to have sprung from the staves of the Apostles. Pines and poplars are now the characteristic timber of the upper parts; but the War brought about such a reckless felling of trees as, it is feared, may affect the climate. The lower slopes are, or were, well wooded, often by sprinkled oaks, giving the green slopes the aspect of an English park; and fields and gardens flourish in the valleys and about lofty villages.

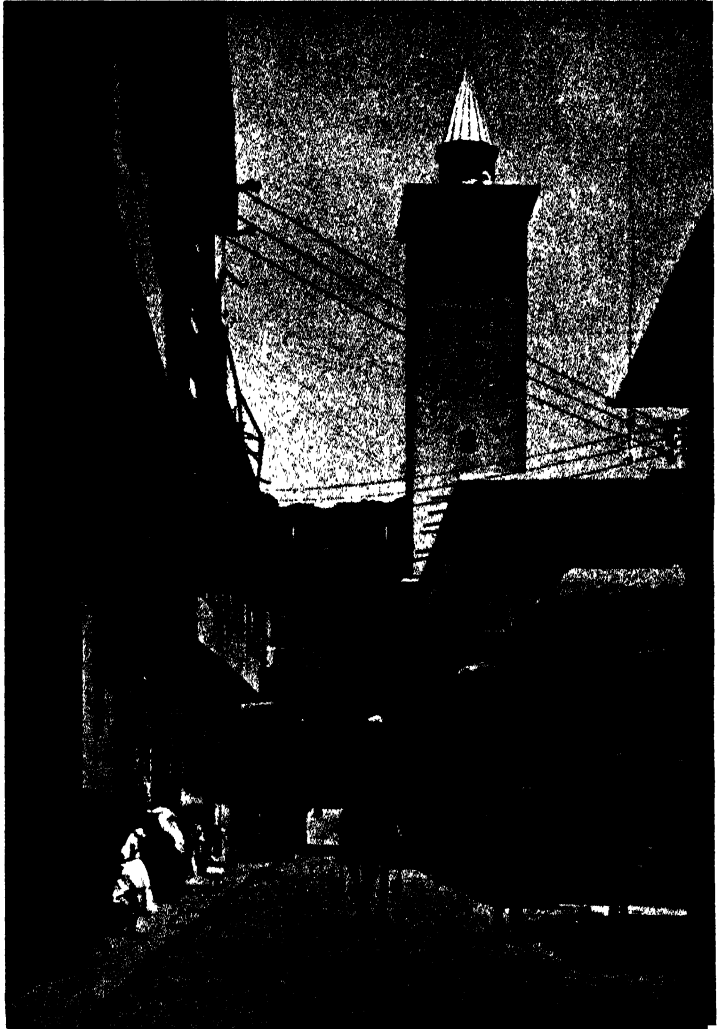
The people are chiefly Maronites and Druses, the former predominant in the north, the latter in the south, often living side by side, once quietly enough, but during last century in a state of ferocious feud, which called in the interference of Christian powers, France in particular claiming the privilege of protecting the Syrian Churches. Under the force of European indignation at such slaughter as has often soiled its dominions, the Porte was stirred into interference, yet from time to time the Druses broke out in acts of violence, then sought sanctuary in the wild Hauran district to the south-east, where the larger part of this race long preserved a quasi-independence. They appear to have been gradually abandoning the Lebanon; and in the Hauran they found Bedouins and Circassians as formidable neighbours, with whose assistance the Turkish Government could school them into submission.

The Druses are a people of doubtful origin, whose faith seems an amalgam of various creeds, probably owing most to Mohammedanism, if not to aboriginal paganism, while attempts have been made to trace it to Simon Magus, to the northern tribes of Israel, and to Indian sages; it has even been suggested that they may represent some stranded detachment of Crusaders. They have neither priests nor temples, but revere a prophet named Hakim as a manifestation of the divine. Their women go not always veiled, sometimes wearing long horns which are a curious feature of their costume. The men are brave, manly, and proud mountaineers, with the defects of these qualities. Still more mysterious are the origin and faith of the Andarieh or Nusarieh, who live in the northern Syrian mountains and are found scattered over into the Taurus. They seem descended from the Nazarini, who may be the ancient sect of the Nazarenes. While outwardly professing Mohammedanism, they cherish rites and traditions into which their youth are secretly initiated, and which they will not communicate to strangers. Yet another strange sect is that of the Ismaelites, believed to represent the "Assassins", followers of

Hassan, that "Old Man of the Mountain" who was a bogey to the Crusaders: their head "is now the Agha Khan, a cultivated gentleman, at home in London as in Northern India. The caverned cliffs of the Lebanon naturally afforded a congenial refuge to retiring or persecuted creeds. Its Maronite inhabitants, as we have seen, hold a peculiar Christianity. Other Christians are divided between the Latin and the Greek Church, while a considerable proportion of them keep Greek rites and discipline, but have been persuaded to come under the wing of Rome. Christians of some sort or other formed the majority of the population before the War; and European influence also being so strong here, the Porte was moved to put the Lebanon under a Christian governor.

Over the Anti-Lebanon, we come down into the plain of Damascus, watered by streams flowing from the eastern side of this range, to lose themselves in closed lakes beyond the famous city. An oasis of 30 miles circumference encloses Damascus, the chief place of Syria, which boasts to be the oldest city in the world; and certainly, alone among those old enough to be mentioned in the days of Abraham, it is still a busy centre of picturesque Oriental commerce, with a population put at over 200,000. Among the Arabs it is so renowned for grandeur and beauty that their legend makes the Prophet refuse to enter its walls, not to

dim the glories of the heavenly paradise. This name for beauty it largely owes to the contrast of the barren desert around its ancient walls with the many-tinted greenery, festooned by the famous Damascus roses, embowering "a city of hidden palaces", as Kinglake found it; "of copses, and gardens, and fountains, and bubbling streams. The juice of her life is the gushing



Donald M'Leish

Damascus: the "Street which is called Straight"

The modern name of this famous street is *Derb-el-Mustakim*, and near to it lies, as in Apostolic times, the Jewish quarter of the city. The street is still a main thoroughfare—one of the longest in Damascus—running from west to east almost through the whole town.

## The World of To-day

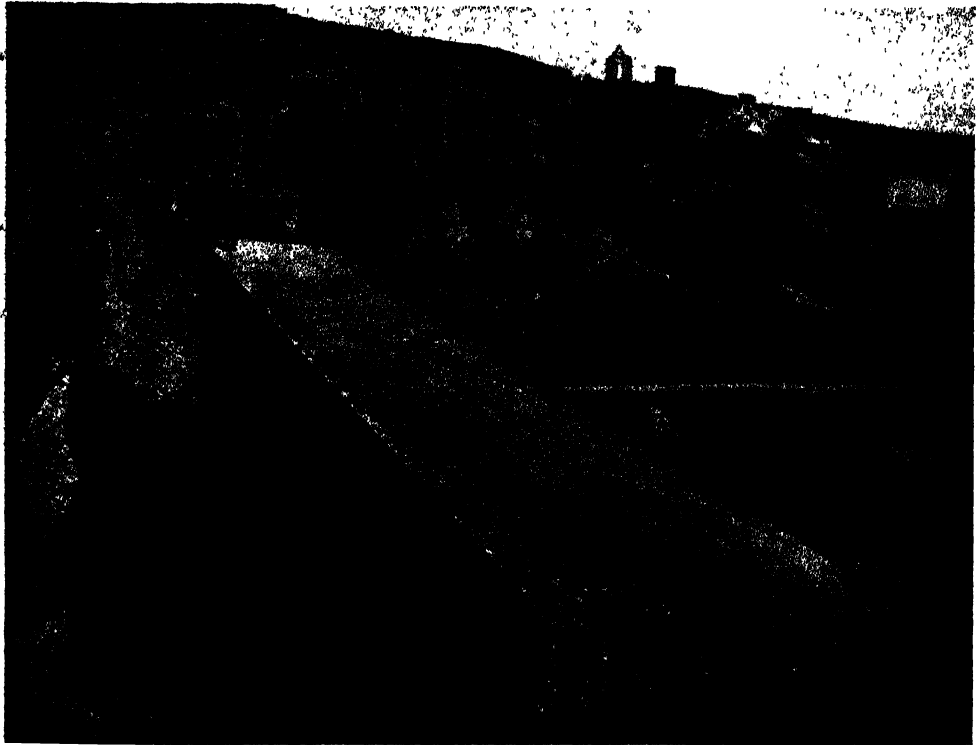
and ice-cold torrent that tumbles from the snowy sides of Anti-Lebanon. Close along on the river's edge, through seven sweet miles of rustling boughs and deepest shade, the city spreads out her whole length."<sup>1</sup> Such poetic descriptions, indeed, are coldly dashed by the warnings of later travellers that these crystal streams prove infected by microbes, so as to make perilous drinking. For Europeans another drawback is in the fanatical spirit of a city that contains some 250 mosques and medresses, in which, little more than a generation ago, thousands of Christians were cruelly massacred.

The "Street called Straight" is still a main thoroughfare, and strangers are shown the house of Naaman, appropriately turned into a leper-hospital, the house of Ananias, and a window as that from which St. Paul was let down in a basket; few Syrian spots mentioned in holy writ have failed to be thus identified to easy faith. For a city of such antiquity, this one has few authentic relics to show, but it preserves its old Citadel from Crusading days, and the tomb of Saladin; then its chief mosque, in our time rebuilt after a fire, goes back through the phases of a Christian cathedral and a Roman temple to days when the house of Rimmon stood near Abana and Pharpar, streams of the former still flowing through Damascus.

<sup>1</sup> "For miles around us lay the dead desert, whose sands appeared to quiver under the shower of sunbeams; far away to the south and east it spread like a boundless ocean; but there, beneath our feet, lay such an island of verdure as nowhere else perhaps exists. Mass upon mass of dark, delicious foliage rolled like waves among garden tracts of brilliant emerald green. Here and there the clustering blossoms of the orange or the nectarine lay like foam upon that verdant sea. Minarets, white as ivory, shot up their fairy towers among the groves; and purple mosque-domes, tipped with the golden crescent, gave the only sign that a city lay bowered beneath those rich plantations. One hour's gallop brought me to the suburban gates of Mezzé, and thenceforth I rode on through streets, or rather lanes, of pleasant shadow. For many an hour we had seen no water; now it gushed, and gleamed, and sparkled all around us; from aqueduct above and rivulet below, and marble fountain in the walls—everywhere it poured forth its rich abundance; and my horse and I soon quenched our burning thirst in Abana and Pharpar. On we went, among gardens, and fountains, and odours, and cool shade, absorbed in sensations of

It has miles of covered markets, each occupied by a separate trade, with their display of manifold merchandise brought here from all quarters by caravans, and now by rail. Besides railway stations, Damascus shows tramways and gas-works as touches of modern prose upon its Oriental romance, and its streets are better paved and provided with sidewalks than is common in the East, the chief thoroughfare being even roofed with corrugated iron. As usual, the outside of the houses seldom gives much hint of the wealth of the inhabitants, unless in the gardens that enclose those of the better class. Strangers admitted, like the author of *Eothen*, to their interior, find here the refinements of Oriental luxury. "The lofty rooms are adorned with a rich inlaying of many colours, and illuminated writing on the walls. The floors are of marble. One side of any room intended for noonday retirement is generally laid open to a quadrangle, in the centre of which there dances the jet of a fountain. There is no furniture that can interfere with the cool, palace-like emptiness of the apartments. A divan (which is a low and doubly broad sofa) runs round the three walled sides of the room; a few Persian carpets (which ought to be called Persian rugs, for that is the word which indicates their shape and dimension) are sometimes thrown about near the divan;

delight, like the knights of old who had just passed from some ordeal to its reward. Fruits of every delicate shape and hue bended the boughs hospitably over our heads; flowers hung in canopy upon the trees, and lay in variegated carpet on the ground; the lanes through which we went were long arcades of arching boughs; the walls were composed of large, square blocks of dried mud, which in that bright, dazzling light somewhat resembled Cyclopean architecture, and gave I know not what of simplicity and primitiveness to the scene. At length I entered the city, and thenceforth lost the sun while I remained there. The luxurious people of Damascus exclude all sunshine from their bazaars by awnings of thick mat wherever vine-trellises or vaulted roofs do not render this precaution unnecessary. The effect of this pleasant gloom, the cool currents of air created by the narrow streets, the vividness of the bazaars, the variety and beauty of the Oriental dress, the fragrant smell of the spice-shops, the tinkle of the brass cups of the seller of sherbets—all this affords a pleasant but bewildering change from the silent desert and the glare of sunshine."—Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*.



Baalbek: the largest building block in the world

Donald M'Leish

The block measures 70 feet in length, 14 feet in height, and 13 feet wide, and would weigh at least 1000 tons.

they are placed without order, the one partly lapping over the other, and thus disposed they give to the room an appearance of uncaring luxury." The famous manufactory of blades and "damascened" steel, inlaid or encrusted with the precious metals, has long gone, forcibly removed by Tamerlane to his own country; but the confectioners and jewellers of Damascus are still in repute, and it makes saddlery, carpets, damasks, silk fabrics, attar of roses, oil and soap, and other wares, besides those that pass through it from Europe and the East. It is also a rallying-point of pilgrim caravans to Mecca, an annual gathering threatened with the loss of some picturesque features by construction of a railway to the holy city.

Less than 100 miles south of Damascus, the chief city of the Hauran was once Bozrah, renowned seat of Og, King of Bashan, an important Roman station and old place of

trade, which may be revived by the railway passing over this naturally fertile upland, its former prosperity attested by impressive ruins of "giant cities" built from the black volcanic rocks that litter its surface, on which bits of Roman road may be traced, sometimes marked by the original milestones. To the north of Damascus, Homs and Hamah are still considerable towns on the Orontes, and on the railway line from Beyrout to Aleppo; but most of this part of Syria is a desert, as yet little explored, though the Arabs declare it to hide the ruins of as many cities as there are days in the year. In the valley between the two Lebanon ranges the railway from Beyrout to Damascus takes one within easy reach of the magnificent ruins of Baalbek or Heliopolis, where, on a rocky platform strewn with gigantic blocks of stone, still stand six columns of a temple that was one of the

ancient world's wonders, with the adjacent shrines to Jupiter and Venus, built by Romans about an altar of sun worship and adapted to Christian devotion till its costly buildings were pillaged and destroyed by one wave of Moslem fanaticism after another; but the conquerors, too, seem to have been moved to build houses of prayer among these stupendous piles; then an earthquake in the eighteenth century completed the wreck. Such feats of architecture were on a scale shown by one block nearly 70 feet long, that lies hewn in the quarry as if waiting for Titanic hands to raise it among as huge masses put in place by the builders of Baalbek, whose stately fragments look down so proudly on the mean village huddled about them.<sup>1</sup>

Not less famous are the ruins of 'Tadmor or Palmyra, that rise remote to the east of Syria far over the volcanic uplands bounding it towards the Euphrates plain. Tadmor, "the City of Palms", claims to have been founded by Solomon, and at one time rose to be chief city of Asia, famed under its heroine Zenobia, "Queen of the East", who in vain confronted the power of the Roman emperors. It was finally destroyed by Tamerlane; but the remains of its colossal pillars, towers, and arches look down on a poor village of Arabs whose chief wealth is in the salt of a marsh that has blighted this once blooming oasis. When we turn back to the coast below Beyrout we find hardly less decayed those famous cities Tyre and Sidon, the London and Liverpool of the ancient world. In every direction this land is thickly set with ruins of the past, some discovered or identified

only in our time, some still awaiting the full examination made difficult and dangerous by the fierce Bedouins who have intruded from their deserts over the Syrian border.

The drainage of the Lebanon is by four main rivers that have given it a claim to be the site of paradise: eastward by the Barada and other streams watering the plain of Damascus; by the Orontes and Leontes, that after flowing north and south respectively turn westward to the Mediterranean; and by a river which, rising in the hollow below the two ridges, flows due south to lose itself in the Dead Sea, its course, for the most part, being far below the level of the Mediterranean, through the longest and deepest chasm on that side of our globe, shut in by lines of heights continuing the Lebanon chains. This is the Jordan, in itself an inconsiderable stream, yet a mighty name in virtue of the influences that have spread from its basin. It leads us down to that small, stony, dried-up land, that has become holy to the leading nations of mankind, among whom so many of its hills, valleys, and streams are household words through "a poetry, a life, an instruction such as has fallen to the lot of no other history in the world". Once densely populated and covered with cities, Palestine sent forth its people to be an alien race in other lands, where they now number some dozen millions, a good half of these before the War subjects of Russia, which took a lively interest, at once religious and political, in their ancient home.

This, with its three Biblical divisions, Galilee, Samaria, and Judæa, is a country rather larger than Wales, in the main a

<sup>1</sup> "A Syrian village is a hive of huts one story high (the height of a man), and as square as a dry-goods box; it is mud-plastered all over, flat roof and all, and generally whitewashed after a fashion. The same roof often extends over half the town, covering many of the streets, which are generally about a yard wide. When you ride through one of these villages at noon-day, you first meet a melancholy dog, that looks up at you and silently begs that you won't run over him, but he does not offer to get out of the way; next you meet a young boy without any clothes on, and he holds out his hand and says 'Backsheesh!'—he don't really expect a cent, but then he learned to say that before he learned to say 'Mother', and now he cannot break himself off it; next you meet a

woman with a black veil drawn closely over her face, and her bust exposed; finally you come to several sore-eyed children, and children in all stages of mutilation and decay; and sitting humbly in the dust, and all fringed with filthy rags, is a poor devil whose arms and legs are gnarled and twisted like grapevines. These are all the people you are likely to see. The balance of the population are asleep within doors, or abroad tending goats in the plains and on the hill-sides. The village is built on some consumptive little watercourse, and about it is a little fresh-looking vegetation. Beyond this charmed circle, for miles on every side, stretches a weary desert of sand and gravel, which produces a grey, bunchy, shrub like sage-brush."—*Mark Twain*.

limestone table-land seamed by hilly ridges and by thin watercourses, whose widespread renown hides their natural insignificance. From Dan to Beersheba is not 200 miles. The whole population, under a million, had begun to increase of late years with greater security and facilities of travel. Not only have Christians fixed their homes here through religious sentiment, but philanthropists undertook to settle on their ancestral soil some of the poorer Jews from European countries, efforts at first frustrated through the abasement of these persecuted people and the dissensions of their patrons, but steadily pursued, and among Jewish enthusiasts even taking shape in aspirations to political ownership of their fathers' land. By capital and industry certain inland plains and strips of coast were once more made to "bloom like the rose"; and the replanting of naked hills is said to modify a too dry climate that has withered up the palm trees once characteristic of Palestine. The olive, the fig, and the pomegranate with its scarlet blossoms still flourish on suitable soil; another fruit-tree is the carob, whose pods, "husks that the swine did eat", are sometimes sold in our shops as "locusts". Interesting experiments of culture have been made, such as the introduction of the eucalyptus as an antidote to marsh miasma. The wild Arabs find themselves pressed out to the other side of Jordan; and those who remain are reduced to order. The more and more frequent visits of European tourists, and the deep interest of Christian nations in the soil of their faith, have kept the Turkish Government less inactive here than elsewhere; so that this one province, among its Asian possessions, appeared actually progressing. But after the Turkish Revolution it fell again under misgovernment, so much exasperating the distress of the people that in increasing numbers they sought better fortune abroad. The German patrons of Turkey have been active here in railway construction, of late with an eye to military considerations. Roads also were being pushed on, though, indeed, sometimes allowed to fall quickly into disrepair

after such a spasm of energy in this way as was shown upon the occasion of the German Emperor's visit. Better harbours should be called for by the growth of a trade whose chief export has hitherto been soap and oranges, with oil, raisins, and tobacco as other increasing products. The Jewish settlers are said to have wasted too much pains on grape-growing, without being able to compete with the Lebanon's noted "golden wine".

The most prosperous colonies seemed to be those of a German body known as the "Temple Society", who, looking for a forthcoming second advent of Christ in Palestine, here planted communities after the model of the primitive Church. Though enthusiastic in their interpretation of Scripture, these Teutonic disciples showed a practical spirit seldom found among Oriental devotees, building and cultivating in such a manner as to give a pattern for the improvement of the country. After many difficulties, chiefly thrown in their way by the authorities, they at last began to thrive in this world's goods as well as in hopes of the next; but their enterprise came to be blighted by the War. Their chief settlement was at Haifa, once a dirty village at the foot of Mount Carmel, now a town of neat, well-built stone houses in rich gardens, where a new harbour should soon be open to the produce of a district that has profited in wealth and civility by the Germans' example and the more mundane speculation of Greek bankers at Damascus. Near this was established a Jewish colony that did not prosper so well. The majority of the population at Haifa were Christians, its core having been that German community. From Haifa, Damascus is reached by a roundabout railway route, striking inland to the Jordan, up it to the Sea of Tiberias, then by the Yarmuk's valley joining the Mecca line at Derat, after passing near the terminus of an older French narrow-gauge rail that ran some way south from Damascus, almost parallel to the other.

Near Haifa the brook Kishon makes an effort to struggle over its bar into the only bay along the coast of Palestine. At the

southern end of this, 10 miles from Haifa, lies the old town of St. Jean d'Acre, renowned in history from Crusading days to when Napoleon was here foiled by Sir Sidney Smith; and a still later episode was its bombardment in 1840 by allied European fleets during Ibrahim Pasha's usurpation in Syria. At one time the most populous place on the coast, Acre has now shrunk into a picturesque fortress showing traces of the Crusaders' work and fragments of carving from the ruins of Tyre and Cæsarea; but it, too, feels the reviving stir of its neighbour Haifa, from which omnibuses plied to Acre as the first wheeled vehicles in modern Palestine. The promontory here ends Mount Carmel, a low ridge over 12 miles long, rough with brushwood and pierced by hundreds of caves, which from time immemorial have given shelter to hermits of many creeds, as well as to less

holy refugees, and among others to the Carmelite monks who clung to this height as a sacred garrison after the final withdrawal of the Crusaders. One of their repeatedly destroyed monasteries was scene of the massacre of Napoleon's wounded soldiers, so heartlessly abandoned on his retreat from Acre. The present monastery, of later date, is supposed to stand over the cave of Elijah, and its inmates exhibit other scenes of his story that have as much authenticity as most of the "holy places" by which pilgrim piety is exploited in Palestine. In our time, Acre again became a religious focus as residence of Abbas, the Bab teacher exiled from Persia.

On the north-east side of Carmel the plain of Esdraelon opens into Galilee. This plain is one of the richest parts of the country, "a huge green lake of waving wheat with its village-crowned mounds rising from it



Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee

Donald M. Leish

like islands", dotted, too, with graves and spangled with flowers. Often has it been watered with blood since the days of Sisera, through long centuries of struggle in which Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, Saracens, Crusaders, Arabs, and Frenchmen have struggled for conquest about the arena of that visionary battle of Armageddon. Across it, on a hill-side, appears Nazareth, home of the "Prince of Peace", whose coming as yet has brought not peace to this corner of earth but rather a sword. Its few thousand inhabitants are chiefly Christians, among whom the Greek Church is in the majority, while the Latin Franciscans have here secured most of the venerated sites. Both bodies have their own convent and Church of the Annunciation; there is also a Maronite convent; and each set of monks is equally scandalized by Protestant tourists apt to pay too little reverence to the spots fixed on as "Joseph's workshop", "Mary's kitchen", and so forth. The Holy Family's house is not shown—has it not, indeed, been miraculously transported to Loretto?—but the pilgrim might take any of the dark, flat-roofed houses as type of that in which Jesus grew up among aspects of life little changed to this day. The town, however, seems to have prospered since it was asked: "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" and it has been spoken of as to-day one of the pleasantest places in Palestine; but that was hardly Sir F. Treves' judgment, who compares the naked hills around it to the barrenest Derbyshire uplands.

Above Nazareth rises Mount Tabor, a green cone under 200 feet high, generally taken as the scene of the Transfiguration, on which several Christian tabernacles have been built, and ruins of other shrines and strongholds attest the reverence given to this height, as to Ararat, by its isolated position. Farther east a double-peaked eminence called the Horns of Hattin, the higher one, about 1000 feet, making "a gigantic natural pulpit", is held to be the scene of the Sermon on the Mount, below which, twelve centuries later, the Crusaders were routed by Saladin. The whole country is full of such "high places", offering them-

selves for devotion and meditation, often overlooking half the extent of Palestine. Then we come down to the Lake of Tiberias, or Sea of Galilee, so called as bulking largely in Christian minds, yet it is not much larger than Loch Lomond. This hill-encircled sheet, some 13 miles long by 6 at the broadest, hundreds of feet below the level of the sea, is an expansion of the Jordan, which higher up formed the smaller Waters of Merom. The lake is still full of fish, but there are few fishers to catch them. Only here and there boats now dot its blue waters; and by the shore, on the overgrown plain of Gennesareth, traces of ruin mark places identified more or less clearly with Magdala, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. The woods by which it was fringed have shrunk to a few palm trees; and of all the cities flourishing under the Romans, Tiberias, noted for its warm baths, alone remains, come down to a squalid town which suffered much from the great earthquake of 1837. After the fall of Jerusalem this became a seat of Rabbinical learning, school of modern Judaism, and its few thousand people are still chiefly Jews. From it a small steamer has plied to the railway at the south end of the lake.

Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed, and Tiberias are the four goals of Palestine pilgrimage for the Jews, who, before the War, were counted at over 100,000 in Palestine, some fifty colonies of them having been planted on the land. Next to Jerusalem in Hebrew eyes ranks Safed, whose only Biblical association is a conjectural one with "the city set on a hill", but where, according to the Talmud, the Messiah will reign for forty years before being enthroned in Sion. This, among the mountains to the north of the lake, is to-day the largest place in Galilee, at least half its population being Jews. Many of these, sent from Europe by charity of their co-religionists to end their lives on the sacred soil, are idle bigots, who frown at the new strain of Jewish colonists transplanted here with the view of reclaiming the country, while the native Hebrews, by their fine features and picturesque garb, contrast strongly with those sallow



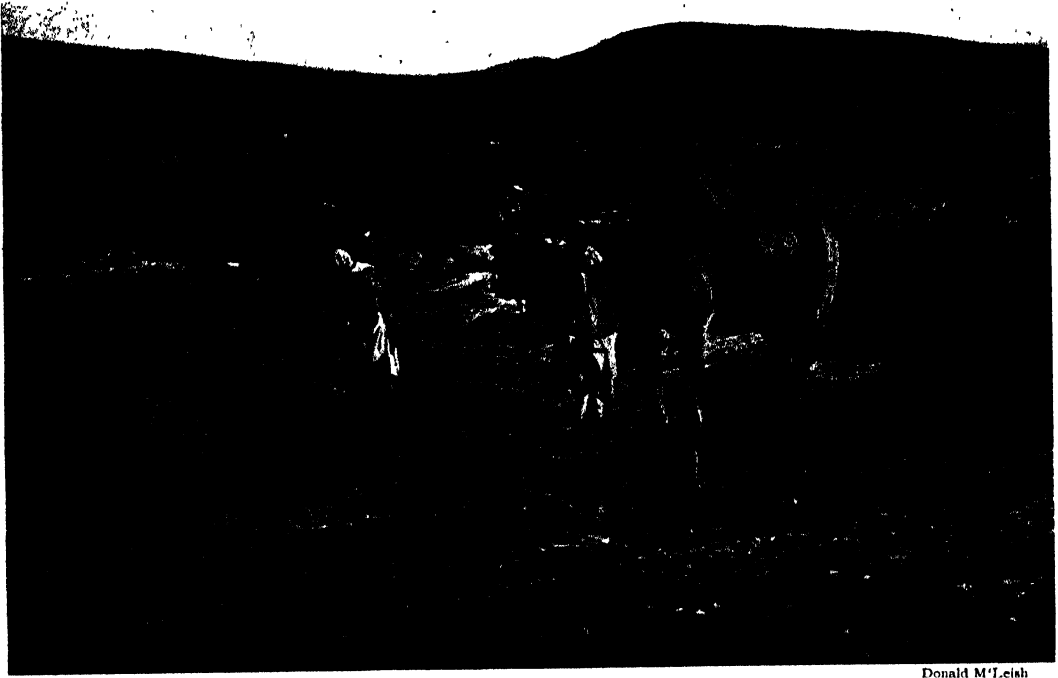
outcasts of Europe in the high hats and greasy gaberdines that distinguish them among the backward nations by whom Jews are kept in abject separation. These poor refugees are accused of populating Safed with more than its due proportion of fleas, which might seem like the proverbial bringing owls to Athens. Safed is little visited by Christian tourists, yet it stands among romantically wild scenery, and from the Crusaders' castle on its craggy height there is a grand prospect on the hills of Samaria to the south, and westward on the volcanic ridge of Bashan, with the Lake of Tiberias in the foreground.

Southward the Jordan takes its crooked course through a hollow some ten miles wide, that deep rift, El Ghor, that is such an extraordinary feature of Palestine, seeming to be the lowest depression on the earth's surface. At one time there was talk of a canal which should rival that of Suez, opening from the sea at Haifa, carried across the plain of Esdraelon to the Sea of Galilee, filling up the Jordan valley, covering historic sites like Tiberias and Jericho, submerging the Dead Sea under a thousand feet of wholesome water, and thence to be continued through a shallower trough to the south, where only a low ridge and some 50 miles of desert would remain to be cut through before reaching the head of the Red Sea Gulf of Akaba. Of this bold project nothing has been heard lately, the natural difficulties being hardly more forbidding than the national jealousies that would be excited.

"Cana of Galilee", Nain, the Valley of Jezreel, the Cave of Endor, Mount Gilboa, such are familiar names meeting us on the road from Galilee into the terraced hills of Samaria. Beyond the mountain ridge that ends in Carmel, southwards, is gained a central plain, on which once was Israel's capital, but the ruins now left about a poor village are those of the Roman city Sebaste. Not far from this, among picturesque and cultivated hills, stands Nablous (Neapolis), the Shechem of the Old Testament, a considerable town and centre of government, where still survives a handful of the Samari-

tan sect, winnowed out by long persecution among Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans alike, that in its little synagogue treasures priceless ancient manuscripts of the law, one of them claiming to be the oldest of written documents. Later ruins mark the site of the ancient temple on Mount Gerizim above, with Mount Ebal opposite it, the valley between green with almonds, peaches, olives, and cotton, and the slopes with vineyards fenced by hedges of huge cactuses. Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb are here pointed out. The chief industry of Nablous is the making of soap, for which there ought to be a greater demand in Syria. Its population, put at 20,000, is nearly all Moslem, and has borne a bad name for turbulent fanaticism.

From Nablous a carriage road leads southwards into Judea, passing by sites that preserve such names as Shiloh and Bethel. But as most travellers approach Jerusalem by sea, let us now return to the coast, bordered beyond Carmel by the Plain of Sharon, whose noted roses are rather red anemones, blooming among tulips, narcissuses, and other "lilies of the field", that include our familiar daisy. This naturally rich flat has of late years been colonized by a strange mixture of immigrants, among them a number of Bosnian Slavs driven from the Danube by the persecution known as the "Bulgarian atrocities"; and near these were settled a detachment of the very Circassian irregulars who carried out those atrocities. More than one tribe of Turkomans also have found their way here from the mountains of Asia Minor. What with German colonists, European Jews, and natives, Laurence Oliphant, who lived here for some years, could enumerate nine different races engaged in cultivating the soil within the space of an English county. On the coast are the impressive ruins of Athbit, said to be the last stronghold of the Crusaders in Palestine. Farther south, some attempt has been made to rebuild Cæsarea, fallen into miserable decay. Founded by Herod the Great in the generation before Christ, this place still shows the colonial magnificence of Rome in the remains of its theatre, hippodrome, and aque-



A Harvesting Scene in Samaria

Donald M. Leish

duct. The Crusaders had already used part of its Roman masonry to strengthen the castle they built at the end of a breakwater enclosing the harbour on one side, the jetty on the other being formed by sixty or seventy prostrate columns lying in the water like stranded logs. To spring up anew upon successive layers of Roman, Byzantine, Moslem, and Gothic ruin, Cæsarea needs a better harbour than that which has hitherto had for its chief business the shipping of water-melons, and of boat-loads of stone, quarried from palaces and temples, to be used at Acre and Jaffa.

Jaffa, or Yafa, as the old name Joppa has become, some way to the south of Cæsarea, was the chief port of Palestine, though not a very convenient one, as in rough weather steamers must lie outside the harbour, and the landing, sometimes impossible, has to be done in boats by the clamorous aid of

Arabs who, to strangers, seem more like pirates than peaceful watermen. Once a great Phœnician harbour on the coast of the Philistines, this is of such prehistoric fame that near it a rock is shown as that on which Andromeda was bound when rescued by Perseus. One derivation of the name is from Jopa, daughter of Æolus; but Japhet has also been claimed as a still more ancient godfather. The house of Simon the Tanner and the tomb of Dorcas do not fail to be exhibited. This place of old memories and myths, after a long spell of insignificance, began to flourish afresh among its orange gardens whose fruit we missed at Christmas-time during the War. Both Jewish and German colonies were settled in the vicinity, where was founded by the Israelite Alliance a large agricultural college for giving the Hebrew outcasts of European cities much-needed instruction in

a kind of industry long unfamiliar to their race. But perhaps the principal business of Jaffa has been in entertaining and forwarding the pilgrims who long used this as a starting-point for Jerusalem, in numbers increasing since Jaffa became a railway terminus with more than one hotel, besides religious hospices to entertain poorer travelers, and agencies that have sprung up for the guidance of tourists. That tourists should appear in larger numbers — *Cook duce et auspice Cook!*—now that the trip was made more easy, might be expected; but *bona fide* pilgrims also, of both the Greek and Latin Churches, have been more and more taking advantage of the facilities for travel. Before the War, Russians especially came in thousands yearly, ignorant believers on their side of Europe willingly catching at the chance of such a visit to sacred shrines as all over the East counts high among means of grace. So Jaffa's population of some 50,000 is kept astir by ship-loads of strangers coming and going on the road to Jerusalem, some 40 miles away eastward.

Besides a good carriage road, there goes from its port the railway which, in answer to fastidious sentimentalists shocked by such an intrusion on holy ground, might plead that it ran only one train a day, a journey of three or four hours by a less direct line than the road. The chief place on the way is Ramleh, believed to be Arimathea, at the crossing of roads from the sea to Jerusalem, and from Egypt to Syria. Here self-exiled monks entertain pilgrims at their first station in the Holy Land; but the Crusaders' Church has been turned into a mosque beneath which forty tombs of nameless martyrs are claimed by each creed for its own. By a line of now abandoned towers, that within the last half-century were found necessary to guard it against plundering Bedouins, the road goes over the Valley of Ajalon, and near several spots more or less clearly identified with scenes of Bible story; past also such novel features as restaurants and cafés among the old religious rest-houses, it reaches the height from which opens a view of the Sacred City that has brought tears to many an eye, as it moved

the stern Crusaders to end their march, stripped and barefoot, in guise of penitents rather than of mailed warriors.

The view of Jerusalem, however, is less striking on this side than from the east, where the elevation of the ground shows the old city better displayed on its cluster of heights, surrounded by stout battlements and entrenched by deep ravines, its chief edifices rising above a close-packed mass of walls and domes, buried beneath which lies layer upon layer of the ruins of war and earthquake. Modern buildings, now spreading without the walls, break increasingly upon its venerable dignity, for since the open country was made safe, and the city more accessible, both Jews and Christians came to settle in greater numbers about a city that, under its Moslem name, El Khuds, is sacred also to the followers of the Prophet. The population, vastly reduced from the multitude crowded here at the time of the great siege by Titus, seems to have at least doubled in the last generation; and before the War was reckoned at 70,000 or so, the greater part of them Jews. In a recent year Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem were numbered at nearly 15,000, two-thirds of them Russians, besides 3000 tourists, mostly from America, that has also sent here religious enthusiasts, a body of whom transplanted themselves to sacred soil in expectation of the second Advent, undeterred by the fate of a like-minded band that fell into sore straits at Jaffa a generation ago. There is no place that focuses the veneration of so many hostile faiths and peoples. This manifold piety brought no small gain to the inhabitants, who drove a flourishing trade in crucifixes, rosaries, and other mementoes of pilgrimage, besides the revenue of beggary and the many contributions at the shrine of that Oriental god, Backshish.

Jerusalem stands upon a central ridge of table-land, almost the highest ground in Palestine, 2500 feet above the sea, overlooked, indeed, by the Mount of Olives from the east, while southwards the hills rise to Hebron. This resembles that other great holy city, Rome, in its site upon a cluster of low heights, Mount Sion in the



Donald M'Leish

Jerusalem: shepherd and sheep at the Damascus Gate

This and the Jaffa Gate are the chief points of entry to the city.

south, and Mount Moriah on the east side the most prominent points, looking down into the Valley of Hinnom and the deep course of the dried-up brook Kedron that form natural moats, while narrower ravines intersecting the city have in part been choked by the dust of ages. Hardly one undoubted structure remains from the days of Christ; but the close-packed, tangled courts, alleys, and stairways that mainly serve for streets present a jumble of older and newer buildings as striking as the motley concourse of visitors, from the wild Arab devotee to the personally-conducted party of American tourists divided in their minds between a sentimental and a critical mood. There are some incongruous patches of modern life on the generally ancient aspect, especially in a growing new quarter

to the west. The city had recently improved its water-supply; it got electric lights and telephones; and there was a talk of tramways to lead out to the famous sites of the vicinity; but the War brought a sore blow to its improvements. Since then it has broken out into such occidental features as colleges, a daily paper in English, an "Empire" cinema, and efforts at much-needed sanitation.

The chief business of Jerusalem, in the exhibition of "holy places", has been conducted in such a way as to suggest a paraphrase of Boccaccio's story of the Jew converted to Christianity by considering how this religion could survive the profligacy rampant at mediæval Rome. Ever since the site of the Crucifixion was fixed, or in the significant Latin phrase "invented",

under Constantine the Great, through a dream of his pious mother, St. Helena, who is believed here to have discovered the veritable cross, the identification of sacred spots has been pursued with the same readiness of belief, and their custody has become a matter of jealous heart-burning to set the most Catholic and Christian powers of Europe by the ears, long after the rescuing Crusaders had abandoned those shrines. Thanks to powerful protection that of late centuries could most readily bring pressure upon the Porte, the Greek Church has come off best in a contest which often set rival believers at blows on what they regard as the holiest spot of Christendom; and hundreds have perished in a tumultuous Eastern gathering about the scene of a supposed annual miracle, when frenzied devotees struggle to light their candles at a fire kindled by priestly jugglery. The burning of the Church of the Sepulchre at the beginning of last century was suspected as the work of sectarian incendiarism. The sects, as they would refuse to be called, have sometimes gone so far as to steal one another's relics. A kind of *modus vivendi* had to be forced on the Churches that gave such perverse illustration of Christian love; and a monument of this arrangement is the dome built in common by France, Russia, and Turkey over the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Turkish soldiers stood on guard to keep Christians from each other's throats; and outside it is beset by beggars exhibiting their loathsome sores.

This edifice is really a group of shrines, the central part being the special property of the Greek Church, while the Latin Catholics, Armenians, Abyssinians, Syrians, and Copts have sanctuaries of their own, and jointly or severally claim proprietorship of the various exhibitions. The Sepulchre is a narrow chapel in which a blaze of stifling lights displays the marble slab

marking the spot where Christ's body is held to have been buried. In suspicious proximity are crowded together, within the same enclosure, the rock of the Crucifixion; the stone rolled away from the Sepulchre; the pillar of the Flagellation; the slab on which, or on the rock below it, Christ's body was laid for anointing; the rock rent by earthquake; the stone on which Lazarus sat while the dogs licked his sores; the tombs of Adam, John the Baptist, and Joseph of Arimathea; the sword and spurs of Godfrey de Bouillon—in all some three dozen holy spots and relics, beheld by the more ignorant pilgrims with awestruck admiration and kissed with passionate devotion, while on enlightened Christians the effect often is rather one of pained disgust at what has been bluntly called a show of "sacred shams". Signor Angelo di Gubernatis, writing from a fervent Catholic point of view, confesses to a "painful impression" on his first visit. Laurence Oliphant, who had a peculiar strain of fanaticism of his own, strangely blended with shrewd common sense, sums up the opinion of a good many Protestant visitors in the remark: "If the Churches had only taken half as much trouble to preserve the moral truths which are to be found in the teachings of Christ as they have to preserve a cave in which he was never buried, the world would have been so much the better instead of so much the worse for their exertions". Another enthusiast, General Gordon, who devoted much ingenious speculation to the subject, put forward a quite different scheme of the sacred sites; and the researches of the Palestine Exploration Society's officials and other competent explorers, if not altogether squaring with Gordon's view, have at least gone to unsettle long-received dogmas on questions where certainty is neither possible nor truly edifying. "He is not here; He has risen", well reflected Dean Stanley.<sup>1</sup>

Better determined is the site of the

<sup>1</sup> "The great natural features, of course, must always remain. Bethlehem, Bethany, and the Mount of Olives are as they ever were, but there are two Gardens of Gethsemane, one claimed by the Latins and one by the Greeks. When we descend to more minute details, they are either purely mythical or at

best only matters of vague conjecture. One of the best illustrations of the purely mythical is Christ's footprint on the rock from which he ascended into heaven, which is a good deal smaller than that of Buddha, which I have also seen on the top of Adam's Peak in Ceylon, or of Jethro, which the Druses

Temple on Mount Moriah, its place now occupied by the group of Moslem fanes enclosed within the Haram-el-Sherif. Here a noble dome covers the rude mass of stone that was probably a high place of heathen worship long before David ruled at Jerusalem. This has been taken for the true Sepulchre, for the height on which Abraham was about to offer up Isaac, for the scene of Melchizedek's sacrifice, for the altar of the Temple; and Jews and Mohammedans look on it as the centre of the world; for which another spot is shown in the Sepulchre Church, a fond fancy not unnatural at this magnetic pole of so many faiths. The temple of the conquerors has an air of solemn dignity wanting to that Christian cathedral with its monuments of feverishly exalted and divided enthusiasm.

"On entering it," says Dr. Norman Macleod, "one is immediately and irresistibly impressed by its exquisite proportions, its simplicity of design, and wonderful beauty. Nowhere have I seen stained-glass windows of such intense and glowing colours. Indeed one of the marked features of the interior is the variety and harmony of colour which pervade it, caused by the marbles of the pillars and wall—the arabesque ornaments and Arabic inscriptions—the rich drapery hanging in the sunlight, with flickering touches everywhere of purple, and blue, and golden-yellow, from the Eastern sun pouring its splendour through gorgeous windows; while every Oriental worshipper, as he bends in prayer or moves about in silence, displays some bright bit of dress embroidered with gold or silver in the looms of Damascus, or possibly of India, and thus adds to the brilliancy of the scene."

showed me in Neby Schaib. Among those open to conjecture, the position of Calvary and the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea are points upon which research may still throw light. Every indication goes to show that Golgotha or Calvary was a knoll outside the Damascus gate, exactly in the opposite direction to that affixed by Christian tradition, and which would do away with the Via Dolorosa as a sacred thoroughfare, the street shown as that along which Christ bore his cross on his way to execution. It is agreed by all authorities that the high, south-western hill, to which the name of Sion has been applied since the fourth century, is that which Josephus calls the upper city, or upper Market Place. The site of the Pool of Siloam is also undisputed, and certain natural features have been determined, which serve

VOL. VI.

Beside this, along with smaller shrines, is the Mosque of El Aksa, originally a Christian Church built over the rock vaults known as Solomon's Stables. These fanes have been open to unbelievers on due payment of fees, even to the despised Jew, who in his own land durst not enter the places sacred to the greatest of his race. The sanctuaries of Islam, too, have their fables. A footprint of the Prophet is pointed out, as elsewhere one of Christ, and even one of the cock which roused Peter's conscience. Then there is the "Flagstone of Paradise", described in Black's Guide to Jerusalem as "a jasper slab let into the pavement above the 'Sepulchre of Solomon', into which Mohammed drove nineteen golden nails, which at certain intervals drop through to the tomb below. When they have all disappeared—at present only three nails remain perfect—the end of the world will arrive, and the Prophet will come to judge the faithful. The dragoman (probably at the instigation of the mosque guardians) usually improves the occasion by suggesting that backsheesh placed on the tomb will ensure the eventual admittance of the tourist—whether non-Moslem or not—into Paradise." From the outer wall, in Moslem belief, a bridge of fine wire will at the day of judgment give safe passage to the souls of the faithful, while the wicked will fall into the gloomy valley below that for more than one creed has shaped its type of hell.

Now that British bayonets hedge in the feuds of fellow-Christians, their orgy of Easter devotions is accompanied by a ceremonious observance of the Jewish Pass-

as data on which to construct the walls of the ancient city, and fix the site and area of the Temple enclosure in the time of Herod. There is still some controversy in regard to the exact position and course of the city walls prior to its destruction by Titus, but this is chiefly maintained by those who are fatally affected in their religious sentiments. There is also a difference of opinion in regard to the area of the Temple building. Practically, however, this point has been settled by the great weight of authority on one side, which affirms that the present Haram enclosure, in which are situated the Mosque of Omar and the sacred stone, represent the area of Herod's temple, only one or two standing out for a restriction of this area. . . . Of the temple of Solomon little is known."—Laurence Oliphant's *Haifa*.

over by those zealous Zionists who seek to make Jerusalem once more the seat of their scattered people, and have already founded here a Hebrew University to vie with Christian colleges. Quarrels of Greeks and Latins, also, have found a counterpart in embittered hatred between the humbled Moslems and the upraised Jews, engen-

which Jerusalem is mined like Rome by its catacombs, more than one of them maintained to be the real Holy Sepulchre; and the knoll which Gordon took for the true Calvary. These and many more spots are duly described in guide-books. There are modern institutions and churches to be seen, like those built by the Kaiser for his



The Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem

Donald M. Leish

dering a sanguinary riot in the streets of Jerusalem; and all over the country our troops had to repress such racial quarrels.

Other sights in and about the Holy City are too numerous even to catalogue here; the Via Dolorosa and its assumed stations of the Cross; the Muristan with its relics of the Crusaders, given to be the site of a German Church; the numerous convents of different brotherhoods, far from brotherly; the Citadel and Tower of David; the Wailing-place of the Jews; the Pool of Bethesda; the rock tombs and caves with

Lutheran and Catholic subjects. Then, outside the city, few pilgrims fail to visit the rival gardens of Gethsemane, and to ascend the Mount of Olives, on the east, its ridge topped by a German hospice and a great block of Russian sacred buildings, mutually suspecting each other for wooden Horses of Troy, the latter with a tall tower that commands a magnificent view over to the Dead Sea. Another conspicuous structure here is to be a memorial to our dead in the long-drawn operations of Lord Allenby's final victory. Beyond this ridge

lies the poor village of Bethany, in which the tomb of Lazarus makes a Moslem shrine, and the house of Mary and Martha still stands for edification of the credulous.

To the south a line of sacred names leads to Hebron, the first city of David, and one of the highest points of Palestine, a little over 20 miles from Jerusalem by carriage road over black and bare limestone ridges. Six miles out an oasis enshrines Bethlehem, venerated by Jews and Moslems as birth-place of David, and by Christians for the group of churches and cloisters that like a fortress guard the crypt where a rock recess, not unlike the chambers lining Eastern caravanserais, is believed to be the manger in which Christ was born. Here, too, are David's Well and the scenes of Rachel's burial, of the idyllic story of Ruth, and of the slaughter of the Innocents, commemorated by a chapel. The town thrives on the manufacture and sale of *objets de piété* and souvenirs; its population of a few thousand are chiefly Christians, said to represent a remnant of the Crusaders. Farther on come the Pools of Solomon, that still supply water to Jerusalem; then the Oak of Mamre, where Abraham pitched his tent; and the last stage of the journey is over the Vale of Eshcol, still showing its luxuriant vineyards. Hebron itself is one of the most sacred places of the Moslem world, scowlingly suspicious of strangers; and the mosque built over the tombs of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the Cave of Machpelah, was opened only to Christians of distinction, Edward VII, as Prince of Wales, being admitted by force of a special firman from the Sultan.

Another excursion is eastwards to the Dead Sea, about the same distance from Jerusalem, a little longer by a sinuous road, of late years safe, and even in a manner practicable for cyclists, though upon strangers may be still impressed the necessity of a picturesquely armed escort. This way goes by the "Inn of the Good Samaritan" to Jericho, a reviving place, with several hotels and a large Russian hospice for pilgrims; but the site of ancient Jericho, some little way off, is desolate, where German excavators have been turning up its

walls. The climate is warm, for we now descend into the Jordan valley, depressed over 1200 feet below sea-level. Across the undulating sandy plain a winding grove of tamarisks marks the course of the Jordan, that runs so rapidly in flood that eager pilgrims rushing in to bathe have often been drowned in the turbid stream over which a strong man could easily hurl a stone, as a tourist of the dark ages reports. At Easter the "Pilgrim's Ford" here becomes a gipsy-like camping-ground for Greek Church devotees eager to be baptized in white garments, henceforth treasured to serve them as a shroud. The interest of those Orthodox believers in the Holy Land is so keen that, had not the Russian Revolution fallen under anti-Christian influences, Russia might have claimed here a dominating position.

Opposite a commanding height said to be that whence Moses surveyed the promised land, above Jericho, the Quarantine Mountain, supposed scene of the Forty Days' Temptation, is crowned by a lofty monastery, and honeycombed by hermits' caves. Another monastery in the naked hills to the south is the famous one of Mar Saba, by which also the Dead Sea might be reached down the course of the Kedron and through the mountains of Engedi. This "hanging nest of bees and drones", built on terraces covering the face of an abrupt chasm, is a veritable fortress, as it would need to be, defending its inmates for centuries against the wild Bedouins, but again and again it has been sacked since the time when a myriad of anchorites were massacred in its cliff caverns. The courage, at least, cannot be questioned of the monks who occupied such stations in the hostile Holy Land. Their successors, who here lead a truly penitential life on bread and water, forbidden to look on the face of women, are understood to be banished to this wilderness outpost of Christendom as a matter of discipline; and some of them may well be as crazed as the hermit whose mysterious retreat Scott fixes here in his *Talisman*, a tale, by the way, that robustly dispenses with topographical accuracy.



Into the Dead Sea, some fifty miles long by a few in breadth, and nearly 1300 feet at the deepest, vanish the sacred waters of Jordan. Sunk below ocean level, this rock basin, bordered by lines of creamy foam, is beautifully blue, but foul with bitumen, nitre, and sulphur which scum its surface, and so impregnate the air that one sitting long on the beach finds his lips grow dry. An attempt to swim is a curious experience, the water being of such buoyancy that one cannot sink, then one falls into ludicrous struggles in kicking out; but laughter is what doctors call contra-indicated, since a drop upon lips or eyes burns painfully, and the taste is described as "a mixture of brine and rancid oil". To float on the surface, however, is easy, as those poor fellows found whom Vespasian flung in with their hands tied, by way of scientific experiment. Beneath this sheet, according to tradition, lie the wicked towns Sodom and Gomorrah. It is said that, contrary to a general opinion, its poisoned waters are not absolutely without life; certainly the myth is untrue that makes birds fall dead in passing over it. The trunks of palm trees have been washed up on shore, as token of a once richer vegetation, in which at present the most notable feature is the so-called "apples of Sodom", proverbial for an ashy core beneath a blooming skin, a phenomenon apparently due to an insect, as in the case of gall-nuts. Commercial enterprise is now turning an eye on this reservoir of liquid minerals, as on the rich phosphate beds of the Jordan valley. The Dead Sea would make a mine of chlorates, by which its water is more thickly impregnated in the depths than on the surface. It contains nearly 200 lb. of salt to the ton, as against 11 lb. in the Caspian, 18 lb. in the Baltic, and 72 lb. in the English Channel. Palestine was growing so much "up-to-date" that a feeble attempt had been made at utilizing these strongly mineralized waters for a *Kur*. Already a small German steamer was started on the sea, plying to a bay on the eastern side, into which comes a river from Kerak, the ancient capital of Moab, now a town of 10,000 people, among the ruins of a once

well-populated country. This enterprise proved premature; but Cook's tours were pushed over into the Kerak country, where there must be still some risk of falling in with Bedouins who demand backshish in the masterful form of blackmail.

Opposite the lower and more jagged heights of Engedi, all along the east bank of the Dead Sea, stand like a wall the mountains of Moab, whose limestone cliffs and promontories, 4000 feet high, cut off Palestine from the Arabian Desert. Northward they pass into the stony uplands of Gilead, southward into Edom, a wilderness of rocky heights and thirsty wadys. These inhospitable regions are now, for the most part, sparsely peopled by wild Bedouins; but Moab still has upland forests and tracts of fertile land watered by streams falling to the Dead Sea, while many a ruin shows how the country once was more civilized.

The Dead Sea has extraordinary interest as a natural phenomenon. Other spots in southern Palestine would call for little notice but for their hallowed associations. Rounded hillocks topped by ruined towers and circled by ledges of bare limestone, with green and grey hollows between, are the main features of the hilly plateau falling to the sea by a plain which was the ancient land of the Philistines. Here Ascalon stands ruined; but Gaza, as old perhaps as Damascus, with its Saracen citadel and its Crusaders' Church turned into a mosque, is still a small town of note as a market for the Bedouins of the desert; and, while its harbour has been silted up, it makes a port for travellers launching out across that sea of sand, beyond which their weary eyes first bathe in green by the banks of the Nile. Southward the elevated wilderness of Beersheba merges with the Amalekite desert on a gradual descent that explains the Scriptural phrase "going down into Egypt", as can now be done by rail from Jerusalem to Cairo.

The Holy Land has here been described mainly as it presented itself to travellers before the terrible storm of human hatred that swept over it after 1914, making it more than ever "a land that is desolate". Its population was on the increase with



Donald M. Lelish

A Wilderness Outpost of Christendom: the famous Monastery of Mar Saba

better communications and security of life and property. Education was making way through missionary colleges. The agents of our Palestine Exploration Society, along with those of other Christian countries, were opening up the remains of this historic soil, from Roman temples to Crusaders' castles, and discovering still older ruins like those of Gezer between Jaffa and Jerusalem, that show several strata of inhabitation over prehistoric cave-dwellings. The modern Syrians were learning to know the civilized world, not only through their many visitors, but through their own wanderings in search of fortune to distant lands, whose prosperity they could compare with the Turks' inefficient dominion over hostile races and religions. Even in out-of-the-way parts the people found means of being informed as to countries under better mas-

ters; and Miss Lothian Bell (*The Desert and the Sown*) speaks of the favourable impression made on them by Britain's careful stewardship in Egypt.

But this nascent regeneration went to the winds of war, when Judæa and Sinai were made base of a futile attack on the Suez Canal. Roused by defeat to fury, the Turks recklessly took revenge on their Christian subjects, nor was the influence of their German masters used to check devastating cruelty. At Jerusalem, as elsewhere, Christian hospitals, convents, and schools were seized, and churches converted to the use of Islam. The Jewish quarter of Jaffa was laid in ruins, and its population expelled. Banks and merchants were plundered, consuls imprisoned, hotels shut up on the stopping of tourist traffic that had been one of the country's chief assets. Misery spread

widely, so that even where Christians and Jews were not savagely attacked, hunger and fever swept them away, as in the villages about Jerusalem. The Government having forbidden the import of corn, in some districts most of the people were starved to death, supplies sent by Syrians from America being intercepted and appropriated by unscrupulous officials, though it should be noted that certain Turkish administrators showed more humanity, setting the Red Crescent to work beside the Red Cross. The railways, that were bringing new life to this country, came to be in part abandoned, or their materials used by the Germans in the construction of new lines, hastily laid by both armies to facilitate their movements. Thus, not for the first, but let us trust for the last time the land of Israel was given over to spoilers as ruthless as the locusts that have often fallen on its fields. The same tragedy occurred all over Syria, which, cut off from the world, its trade dislocated, its industries paralysed, is believed to have lost by famine and disease some half a population roughly counted at two millions before the War.

It is sad to think how the sacred ground where peace on earth was proclaimed of old became in our day an Armageddon battle-field for Christian nations. Russia, we remember, as champion of the Orthodox communion and hereditary foe of the Turk, had a concern here that gave rise to the Crimean War. France, undertaking a similar protectorship of the Latin Christians, had kept an eye upon Syria as coveted inheritance from the possessions of the "Sick Man", who lingered so long on his bolstered-up death-bed. Of late the German Empire had shown a strong disposition to look for a Naboth's vineyard here. No proprietary designs on Canaan had been evinced by Britain, to which, as to America, their Holy Land was an object of sympathetic regard. But Britain, too, had vested interests at this end of the Mediterranean, notably the guarding of the Canal that is her highway to the East; so mainly to British arms fell the accomplishment of "the last Crusade".

In the settlement of this region, freed from the yoke of Stamboul, the Allied apportioners gave France a mandate as protector of Syria, and to Britain a similar charge of Palestine. But therein they flouted a strong sentiment soon manifested in an agitation leading to a declaration of Syrian independence, with Damascus as its capital, and the Emir Feisul, son of the King of the Hedjaz, as its prince. While we were hailing the help of that new-made Arab power against Turk and Hun, watchful observers had warned us that its pretensions would presently be pushed beyond the bounds of Arabia, after the example of Mohammed. The would-be sovereign state set up at Damascus was of course inspired by Moslem zeal; and, for all its professions of fair play to the Christians on the coast side of Syria, it may be questioned whether Arab domination here would be much better than that of the Turk. The first effect of Feisul's claims was to bring French troops into collisions with Arabs, seeming rather bands of robbers than soldiers, and to spread fresh outbreaks of brigandage through the harassed Lebanon. The French advanced to occupy Damascus, whereupon Feisul shrunk from armed resistance, choosing rather to appeal to the good will of the Allies. Then France's protectorate, reaching down to the Sea of Galilee, was organized as three semi-independent Syrian states, while the more advanced Lebanon province, with Beyrout for its capital, is directly administered by French officials.

Britain has to reckon with similar hindrance to her design of fostering in Palestine an asylum for repatriated Jews, bound to be an eyesore to Moslem fanaticism. The appointment of a British Jew as our first governor, while he showed an impartiality that should allay suspicion, naturally gave offence to a population in which Jews are outnumbered by almost ten to one. It is a further question how far that design has a chance of carrying itself out to good result. It has been warmly pushed by "Zionist" advocates, and found ready recruits willing to trust in the protection of our arms, even some enthusiasts looking

forward to the revival of glories like Solomon's. It seems, however, doubtful if Jewish patriotism, long dispersed and strange to the activities of Cain and Abel, would persistently undertake the reclamation of a sterile land, where the money-lenders and traders of Europe could make but a poor living by discounting bills for each other, and must plant or build with a weapon in one hand till fully insured against *pogroms* from their Bedouin neighbours. But if any considerable number of this enduring people, oppressed by so many Egyptians whom they have so often found the art to spoil, should choose to face the hardships and perils of the wilderness into which their home has been turned, it will be the part of true Christians to wish them God-speed, as to give peace to our world's holiest places. Against peaceful settle-

ment is the fact that the Syrian population, of hostile creeds, but predominantly Arab in blood and speech, have caught up the texts of national unity and independence so loudly preached in Europe. Through the reek of battle and pillage, not yet cleared away, it can be seen that the Arabs, while impressed by British justice, American philanthropy, and French military prowess, are bitterly disappointed of their hope to see Damascus the restored capital of an autonomous state, and hotly resentful of their land being made a dumping-ground for favoured foreign communities. A difficulty more easy to overcome has been the drawing of bounds between the French sphere of influence and that of Britain on the side of Mesopotamia, where a complex of like opposition adds a heavy load to the "white man's burden".



Donald M'Leish

Weeping for departed glories: Friday afternoon at the Jews' Wailing Place, Jerusalem

Men, matrons, and maids lean against the historic walls, rocking themselves in their anguish, and filling the air with lamentations.

## MESOPOTAMIA

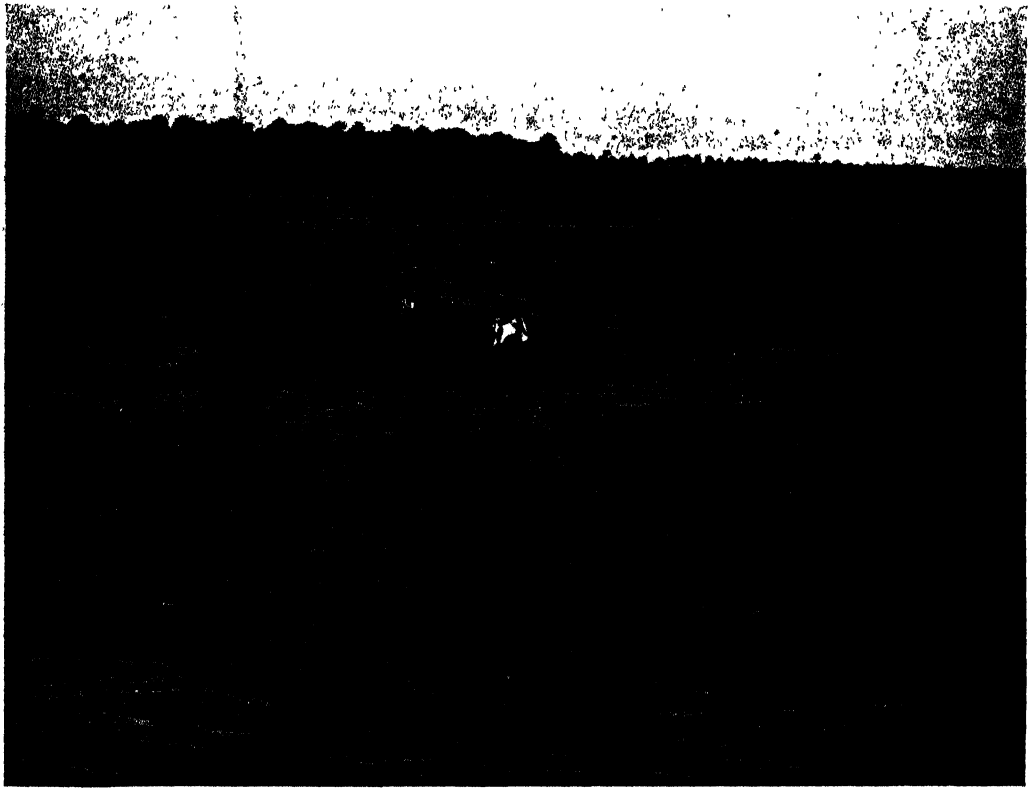
In dealing with the Turkish domains of Asia, we have already seen how hard it is to draw closely either historical or ethnographic boundaries. As Armenia merges with Kurdistan, so the latter loses its name on the south-west side, where its mountain masses fall to the great basin of the Euphrates and the Tigris. This is the ancient Mesopotamia—"land between the rivers"—a region of deep interest as the cradle of recorded history, if not of civilization. Here was the home of that Accadian race dimly identified with the Chaldees. Here rose the great Assyrian and Babylonian powers, whose ruins to-day seem mocking monuments of historic fame. Here the proud Roman Empire found its bounds in the mountain walls of Parthia. Here flowed one tide of conquest after another, Persian, Arab, Tartar, Turkish, overthrowing the shapes of former dominion and confusing the original elements of population. Poor, oppressed, dismantled of its glory, this arena for so many resounding scenes came to be shared among the provinces of Aleppo, Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra. The Germans cast an eye upon it as a sphere of influence or acquisition, to be facilitated by the Baghdad railway which should put them in a position for pressing farther eastward. Britain, for her part, had an interest in this line as the shortest road to India; and for a century past we have kept a Resident at Baghdad, looked on as an outlying post of our Eastern Empire.

In the Great War, German officers and artillery steeled the Turks for stubborn resistance to a British expedition from India—in its first stages disastrously mismanaged. We remember how our gallant army of white men and brown, harassed by treacherous Arabs and for a time brought to a stand by sickness, had advanced almost to Baghdad, but then were forced to fall back upon Kut to entrench themselves there beside a bend of the Tigris. A relieving force, in turn delayed by floods and other difficulties

of a trying climate, did not arrive in time to save General Townshend's force from being starved into surrender, in hearing of the guns of their friends. But next year Sir Stanley Maude could press on through strong defensive lines to enter Baghdad and scatter the Turks up the Tigris, after a long tale of exploits and sufferings that have made the name of Mesopotamia freshly familiar in many a British household. The humbling of our avowed enemies did not bring peace, for our own troops had still to struggle with spasmodic attacks from bands of mountaineers and Arabs of the desert, their hands against every neighbour from whom plunder could be won.

In this Biblical "Land of Shinar", the Chaldeans and Assyrians have long been overlaid by a mixture of races, among whom we find Armenians and other Christians, Kurds and Turks, with a fresh element in Arabs who have pressed out of the neighbouring peninsula, some more or less settled, some still restlessly turbulent, who are to their industrious neighbours what the Kurds are to the Armenians. A strain of Jewish blood appears to have been absorbed; and Jews of old date hold together in Mesopotamian towns, most numerous at Baghdad. The lower part of the double valley where the two rivers draw together is known to the natives as Irak-Arabi, the upper and broader extent between the Tigris and the Euphrates as El Jezireh or the Island, these answering roughly to the ancient Babylonia and Assyria, each of which in turn extended themselves far beyond their original bounds. The present population of all Mesopotamia is estimated as about three millions.

Sloping downwards from the Taurus, enclosed between the mountain borders of Syria to the west, and of Persia to the east, a vast basin, once the head of the Persian Gulf, has been filled in by soil deposited on it through ages, much of this naturally fertile, which in bygone days nourished enormous populations, but for want of



Mesopotamia: a typical raft, or *kellek*, on the Tigris

These rafts are constructed of inflated goat-skins, covered with a framework of wood. Laden with produce, they are floated down the river to Baghdat, where the wood is broken up and sold. Indeed, this constitutes the chief source of wood-supply for the city. The skins are sent back by caravan to the point from which they came

tillage and irrigation wide stretches have degenerated into desert wastes or swamps. The undulating upper plains are edged by stony, treeless slopes, and broken by volcanic cones and craggy heights and ridges; but here there is a better rainfall. A most unlovely prospect opens on the gradual descent to the great river valleys, as described by Mr. Baillie Fraser. "One's reason refused to be persuaded that the wide tracts of gravel and black earthy hillocks that lay stretched around us, with rocks protruding from their sides and summits intersected with dry ravines, all obviously unproductive, save of a scanty pasturage, could ever have been the theatre of those mighty events which history relates,

where hosts of innumerable warriors struggled for victory and empire." And even when one comes down from scorched deserts, realm of the proud Semiramis and the luxurious Sardanapalus, to the alluvial flats upon the banks, their exuberant vegetation is often found blighted by the sloth and corruption that go with Turkish government. Where water can be hoisted from the river or drawn off by irrigating canals, oases of corn, clover, and fruit tempt raids from predatory Arabs; but often the dried-up channels, out of which it has shifted its course, show crumbling mounds that once were villages, or the deserted ruins of towns, palaces, strongholds, and monuments, about which the barren soil may be found thickly

strewn with broken pottery, as tokens of former habitation, now dwindled to mud-huts or nomad tents.

The Euphrates has a crooked course of about 1750 miles, through a basin estimated at 260,000 square miles. As we saw, it is formed by two branches rising in the mountains of Armenia, at first flowing westward, then uniting to break southward through the Taurus walls of ancient Assyria. Having forced its way by hundreds of cataracts boiling under black basaltic cliffs into the upper plains of Mesopotamia, it becomes navigable at Biredjik or Bir, an ancient city that, like so many others in this harassed land, clusters at the foot of a romantic rock citadel, by which goes the old caravan road from Syria to Baghdad. The ordinary channel of the river here is about 150 yards wide, but its floods fill a bed more than ten times as broad. Hence for a stretch the river runs parallel to the Levant coast, from which it turns away to the southeast, and in this general direction meanders towards the Persian Gulf, receiving few perennial streams from its desert borders. Steamers have made their way as high as Bir; but more familiar craft are boats of reeds "daubed with slime and with pitch", like Moses' ark, or rude rafts buoyed up by the inflated skins which people of these regions use to help themselves across a fordless stream. Such rafts serve to float down the produce of Mesopotamia, among which, it appears, a growing place is taken by liquorice-root.

Now winding round hills and rocky masses easily confused with the ruins that crumble upon them, now expanding into broad reaches which in the dry season may become a chain of pools linked by the stream, now shut in by weird cliffs or dank jungles, where the feathery tamarisk prevails, with here and there a clump of cotton poplars or a forest of wild mulberry trees, the Euphrates comes down into a country whose general characteristic still is, as in the days of Xenophon, a flat treeless plain, naked or overgrown with wormwood and aromatic plants. Across this open expanse sometimes sweep sudden and violent hurri-

canes, like that which wrecked the *Tigris* on Colonel Chesney's exploring expedition. Volcanic agency is often visible, as in the wells of naphtha and bitumen that give grimy prosperity to places along the banks, like Hit, legendary scene of the caulking of Noah's ark. Other spots are kept green by irrigation-streams and water-wheels; and towns or villages are passed, seldom without ruined castles and tombs recalling their days of fame, when this now poor land was marked by the passage of classical or Saracenic conquerors. A road along the right bank has been ill guarded by small Turkish posts, centres of authority being such decayed towns as Rakka and Deir, whose governors found it hard work to collect a sheep-tax from Arab herdsmen. At Ramadie, in 1917, our troops signally defeated the Turks, not far from where Cyrus fell at Cunaxa. At Anah, which Dr. W. F. Ainsworth calls "the most picturesque and delightful town on the Euphrates", the vegetation takes on a southern richness, its fringe of gardens showing palms, figs, pomegranates, and orange trees, that also cover the islands by which the river is broken. A line of low hills running across the desert from Syria, with poor Arab villages dotted below them, forms a barrier between the northern and the southern plains; and through it comes down into the Euphrates the Kahbur, its only tributary here, while another stream, the Tarthar, loses itself in a salt-swamp between the two great rivers. On the western side intermittent trickles may appear in dry valleys reaching down from the Hauran plateau or the Arabian hills.

The modern places on the Euphrates are mostly inconsiderable, and we cannot linger by all the ruins of ancient greatness to be traced among surrounding desolation. The most famous of these is Babylon, that stood some distance to the south of Baghdad, where the Euphrates and the Tigris draw together, then turn away again before their confluence. The town of Hillah is partly built of bricks from the ruins of Nebuchadnezzar's capital, which extended over the plain within a walled square, its size



Making Sun-dried Bricks, near Nineveh, Mesopotamia

Underwood & Underwood

apparently much exaggerated in tradition, with a branch of the river flowing through it, by diverting which Cyrus gained an entry into the doomed city; then again Darius "swept it with the besom of destruction". Alexander the Great, who died here, had proposed to restore it; and the remains of a Greek theatre make a monument of his conquest, which did not save it from falling into rapid decay.

Babylon is indeed "become heaps", its magnificence now represented by wrecks of brickwork and shapeless mounds in which German archæologists have disclosed what seems the hall of Belshazzar's feast, and when the War broke out were still patiently tracing the palace of the great king; the "hanging gardens" that counted among

the ancient world's seven wonders, where half a century ago a single solitary tree could be seen; the towering temple of Belus that made such an offence to exiled Israel, perhaps identical with the tower of Babel; and other names renowned in the scriptures of different faiths. A hillock crowned by a ruin, standing up apart on the Arabian side and known to the natives as Birs Nimrod, is by some taken for that prehistoric monument; but all certainty is lost in the ignorance of ages, though the discovery and interpretation of cuneiform inscriptions have thrown much light on the early annals of our race. Bricks have been unearthed of the date of Hammurabi, whose wise laws, in some notable points corresponding with those of Moses, were published more than



2000 years before our era. The city seems to have been about ten miles in circuit. Most remarkable also are the excavations at Nippur, about 50 miles south-east of Babylon, where an American expedition has dug out remains of palaces and temples indicating the foundation of a city at least seven or eight thousand years old, so vast, that though hundreds of Arabs were kept at work, it is calculated that a century may be spent in fully disclosing it along with other ruins to which peace might bring fruitful exploration.

The difficulty of mapping out these hidden monuments by the dubious indications of old writers, and of identifying others that dot this country on all sides, is increased through the probable shifting of the Euphrates, which crooks and bends its sluggish way over the plains, and here has overflowed into great stagnant lakes or marshes, "a possession for the bittern, and pools of water". Near one of these lakes to the west of Babylon is Kerbela, a place of great sanctity to the Persians and other Shiah Mohammedans, as containing the tomb of their saint and martyr Hussein, son of Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet, whose violent death here is for their faith what the Crucifixion is for Christendom. Many caravans cross the Tigris and the Euphrates on a perilous pilgrimage from Persia, bringing hither from afar thousands of desiccated corpses to be buried around this shrine, the idea of burial in consecrated earth being so strong a feature of Shiah religion, from which the priests and people of Kerbela profit in pocket, but hardly, one would guess, in sanitary conditions. The riches of Kerbela, indeed, were much plundered by Wahabi assailants about a century ago, then it is said to have made a fresh accumulation of costly gifts, but during the late War this district suffered ravages that brought it to starvation.

To the south of Hillah, Nejef or Meshed Ali on its great swampy lake is another goal of pilgrimage to the tomb of Ali, about which are many other revered shrines, and this consecrated soil also still makes a Persian cemetery. Kerbela and Nejef

may be called Persia's extra-territorial Canterbury and York, as seats of the greatest *mollahs* of the Shiah Church, which has here its chief school of theology. A tomb given out as Ezekiel's is shown in this vicinity, where Kufa, now an insignificant village, was at one time the capital of the Caliphs, and has passed on its name to the *Kufic*, or early Arabian characters, that figure in ancient inscriptions. This marshy wilderness was then a rich plain, through which, perhaps, the river ran a different course, and by artificial channels was certainly drawn sooner into connection with the Tigris. In older days they had separate estuaries on a coast that is now pushed far out over the flat land. About their confluence at Kurnah still blooms one of the rival sites of the Garden of Eden, in which is even pointed out the Tree of Knowledge. A garden it once was through an elaborate system of ancient canals, and a garden again it might verily become by the carrying out of the irrigation works started in this region before the War.

The Tigris, though not such a great river, has the importance of larger towns still prospering upon it, and is better fed by streams from the snows of Kurdistan. In swirling rapids under deep gorges, between precipices bristling with robber strongholds and pitted by caves that send out a swarm of plunderers on any luckless wreck, below Diarbekir (see p. 80) it crooks on through the mountains to a mound-studded desert, swept alternately by scorching "poison winds" and freezing blizzards. Here it is joined by the railway above Mosul, frontier town of Arab and Kurd, once noted for the fine fabrics that have supplied us with the name *muslin*. Rather more populous than Diarbekir, it is described as a mean place, with some imposing mosques and several churches of rival Christian sects, to which a certain dignity may be given by the use of a white gypsum quarried from the hills under the name of "Mosul marble"; but of late the Christians have had a bad time of it in this turbulently fanatical city. Its chief interest is the ruins of Nineveh, the fallen capital of Assyria, extending far along the river's



Underwood &amp; Underwood

Transport in Babylonia: all his belongings (including two wives!) on a donkey's back

opposite bank in mounds, the excavation of which by Botta, Layard, and others, has enriched European museums with so many impressive figures and inscriptions. Access to stone quarries in the mountains has imparted to the remains of Nineveh more durable form than in the case of the brick walls of Babylon. The mound chiefly excavated by Layard revealed the sumptuous palace of Sennacherib; another, that may hide greater treasures, its Moslem masters have not allowed to be disturbed as being crowned by an alleged tomb of Jonah which counts for a very sacred shrine. Since the Turkish Government forbade the export of such relics, a stone bull, that would have fetched thousands of pounds in Europe, was sold cheap by a rapacious governor to be broken up for lime.

Below Mosul come the remains of an old dam, which, with rapids and sandbanks, hinder steam navigation on this stretch of

the Tigris. Twenty-five miles down it, on the left bank, are the remains of Nimrud, also ransacked by Layard. At Hamman Ali, lying some way back from the other side of the river, warm sulphur springs make a local spa, and a petroleum field is worked here. Much of this valley appears to be rich in mineral oils which the railway should serve to exploit. German engineers indeed had marked this as likely to prove one of the world's greatest oil-fields, whose exploitation by Britain is now grudged by some of her allies. At Shergat German excavators have been diligently at work on the mounds of Asshur, the earliest Assyrian capital, overlaid by a buried Parthian city; and a day's journey thence will bring one to the remarkable ruins of Hatrae, that could once withstand the power of Roman emperors. Tekrit is the next place of note as the birth-place of Saladin. Then on the left bank, the rail upwards from Baghdad was in 1916

working to Samarra, where a seat of the Caliphs has left its traces for many a mile about the glittering dome that marks a shrine of Shiah pilgrimage, and the tower of a Babylonian temple which may be the oldest sacred structure in our world.

From Mosul to Baghdad is some 300 straight miles, but twice as far by the river's twistings. The ordinary caravan route bent away from the left bank of the Tigris, crossing its tributaries the Great and the Little Zab, to keep by the edge of the hill country through Erbil, the ancient Arbela, that gave its name to Alexander's crushing victory over Darius, though fought on a distant plain; then past Kerkuk, a mainly Turkish city, whose chief mosque boasts to be the burial-place of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego among many tombs of purely Moslem saints. This road leads by the edge of grand mountain scenery, for which few travellers on it have hitherto been concerned to turn aside, but some who can speak with authority declare that no wonders of the Colorado or the Yosemite surpass a cañon through which the Zab breaks through the Taurus, between lofty peaks "familiar with forgotten years".

Another route, which is that taken by the railway, leads down the right bank of the Tigris, past desolate scenery showing remnants of bygone magnificence. Mesopotamia's greatest city is still Baghdad, which our troops entered 11th March, 1917, to be received with acclamations from many of its motley inhabitants, rejoiced at deliverance from their Turkish yoke, spiked to fresh soreness by German tyranny. The power of Britain had been already so much respected here that when a recent governor, in a spasm of reforming zeal, began to open up the tangle of narrow lanes by a broad

new thoroughfare, and proposed to drive it through the grounds of the British residency, his plan was brought to a stick by the posting of a single sepoy sentry. Before the War we had almost a monopoly of Baghdad's trade, a British line of steamers being its best communication with the Persian Gulf. This meeting-place of caravan roads is set in green gardens of the date-palm, which has now supplanted the olive and other plants of higher ground, as Arabs have become the leading element of the population. Surrounded by the graves of dead cities and dried-up channels that once made its plain widely fertile, modern Baghdad, with some 200,000 inhabitants, is still a notable city, the capital of Lower Mesopotamia, though far fallen from its splendour in the days of "Good Haroun Alraschid", who, by the way, was not such an admirable monarch as we see him represented in fiction, his fame darkly stained, in fact, by cruelty to Giafar, the companion of his nocturnal rambles, and to the rest of the Barmecide family. Since his day the city has been shifted from the western mainly to the eastern bank; and the original Baghdad stood higher up the river, whose overflowings have worked it repeated mischief. More than once almost unpeopled by plague, it suffers chronically from the "Baghdad Button", a scarring eruption which, like the "Aleppo Button" and the "Mosul Button", or, as named from other towns where it marks many faces, is believed to come from poisonous fly-bites, such as may have been the cause of Job's boils.

The city is described as rather meanly built of yellow brick, with many, for the most part modern, mosques in the Persian rather than the Turkish style,<sup>1</sup> for its more pretentious architecture recalls a day of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Walter B. Harris (*Batoum to Baghdad*) thus presents the lively panorama of the bazaars with their throng of motley population: "Rich town merchants in long garments of silk, half-concealed by their sashes of cashmere and the folds of the *abba* or sleeveless cloak, which is so typical of this part of the East; Seyids and mollahs, with proud, unrelenting features and white complexions, robed in silks, and wearing turbans of neatly-folded white or dark-blue muslin; Turkish officers in broad-cloth and gold-lace, with jingling spurs and swords; rough

Kurdish *hammala*, porters, and carriers of heavy cases of merchandise; half-nude, laughing street urchins; private soldiers in their neat blue cotton uniforms and red fezzes, swaggering along hand in hand; African negroes; cringing Jews and Armenians, so difficult to tell apart, either in looks or character; Arabs from the country, with their soiled linen and faded abbas of brown or brown-and-white stripes, their heads covered in coloured *kifiyehs*, the points of which hang over the back and shoulders, held in place by rolls of soft camels' hair; beggars

Persian mastery in this part of Mesopotamia, where the hostile Sunnite and Shiah creeds of Islam are mingled to some extent — the former now predominating. Baghdad is headquarters of one of the most notable Moslem brotherhoods, answering to the Christian monkish orders; and it has long had a Catholic bishop, cathedral and college rooted here like the dock beside the nettle. Among a mass of leaning minarets, bulging domes, and warping walls, really ancient structures have much disappeared; most of its old buildings have fallen, but one fine one is shown as the tomb of Zobeide, Haroun's beautiful wife; and there is a notable minaret of the thirteenth century. Its bazaars are large and well stocked with foreign goods, as with the leather, silk, cotton, and woollen stuffs that are the local industries, for which the railway should open up new markets. This city has already the distinction of a tramway, leading out to the adjoining Shiah town of Kazimin, a great step in progress for this part of the world. The broad river, crossed by a



Baghdad: the famous Bridge of Boats

In the foreground are a couple of the circular craft (*kufas*) used throughout this region since the remotest antiquity for local transport. Made of basket-work covered with bitumen these boats are often large enough to carry half a dozen horses and twice as many men.

singing as they pass, often a long string of them, and blind; donkeys driven along with loud cries, bearing on their backs the freshly-filled skins of water; Arab Sheikhs on Arab horses, gay with bridles studded with silver plaques, and mounted on gaudy saddles, their belts full of arms; youths from the country, rich with some unlawful plunder,

bridge of boats, is another scene of activity, where in hot weather bronzed youths swim

washed, and clean, and laughing, planning how best they can ill-spend their ill-gotten gains, intent upon the pleasures of the city; auctioneers vending all kinds of wares, from old embroidered clothes to modern revolvers, from brass candlesticks to cotton quilts, all going to and fro, screaming, laughing, yelling, and quarrelling!"

like fishes among hundreds of craft, from steam vessels to such circular boats of hide stretched on osiers as were noticed by Herodotus. The suburb on the farther side is chiefly given up to Persian Shiah, whose quarter a German visitor characterizes as marked by "greater dirt, smaller houses, more dogs, and less civil behaviour to Europeans". Persians are familiar here, not only in the way of business, but through caravans of pilgrims and corpses on the way to their shrines at Kerbela and Nejef Ali, coming by the trade-route through the frontier city of Khanikin, that should be the line of a rail into Persia.

Near Baghdad the Tigris takes in the Diale, flowing from Persian mountains to the east past nearer hills that mark an ancient coast line, beyond which the flat river plain has silted itself for hundreds of miles. About twenty miles below, on opposite sides of the river, here making a long loop, are the remains of the Macedonian city Seleucia, and of a Parthian capital, Ctesiphon, where one fine arch is associated with the name of the Great Chosroes, as is this district with the Emperor Julian's disastrous campaign, and with the degenerate Persian kingdom's overthrow by the fierce missionaries of the Prophet. Here, in our first advance on Baghdad, General Townshend won a Pyrrhic victory at such heavy cost that he had to fall back upon Kut, where part of the Tigris waters go off by a channel to join the now converging Euphrates at Nasarieh. This, and Amara on the Tigris are modern towns, which, fostered by reforming governors, should rise to note under a regime of steady progress. Below Amara stands the reputed tomb of Ezra, venerated by rival creeds. The monotonous view about these spots can now be compared by many a British soldier with Mrs. Bishop's description: "The level plains of Chaldæa, only a few feet higher than the Tigris, stretch away to the distant horizon, unbroken until to-day, when low hills, white with the first snows of winter, are softly painted on a pure blue sky, very far away. The plains are buff and brown, with an occasional splash—near villages as buff and brown as

the soil out of which they rise—of the dark green of date-gardens, or the vivid green of winter wheat."

Below Baghdad the Tigris is found reversing the rule of rivers by growing narrower and shallower on its tortuous course, much of its water having been drained off by cuts and overflowings; but it can float not too deeply laden steamers coming up from the sea, which need careful steering not to stick in its sharp bends and ebbing sand-banks. Bordered by reed-choked marshes or lagoons on a dead flat, at Kurnah it joins the Euphrates, over a hundred miles above the Persian Gulf, and henceforth the united streams are known as the Shat-el-Arab. The Arab race makes the main population of Lower Mesopotamia, in whose more fertile parts the Bedouins have settled down as tamer *fellahin*. Kurnah might well appear an Eden to those coming from the arid upper plains, whose woolly and thorny plants and thin grasses have here given place to more succulent vegetation. Between hedges of date-palms the river flows in a jungle of reeds, rushes, and tall grass, its banks sometimes shaded by groves of tamarisk, acacia, and poplar, but the absence of the "willows of Babylon" has been remarked on. The alluvial soil is often found drowned by inundation or blighted by saline efflorescences; sometimes threatened by a fringe of shifting sand-hills that become slowly anchored down through the growth of such vegetation as the mariscus, with its rich green stems and glistening spikelets; but other parts along the embankments of the river and the branching canals are richly cultivated, and in very early spring the grassy plains glow with a profusion of flowers. As we come south, of course, the sun has grown more powerful, while the fall of the land, too, takes us away from a rigorous winter. In June a north wind may bring some relief to a summer of stifling heat; then cooler weather is welcomed in October, when the Mesopotamian plains have been scorched up, but soon revive under moderate showers passing over the Lebanon from the Mediterranean.

Nearly half-way down the Shat-el-Arab



Date Harvesting, Mesopotamia

Harry Cox, F.R.G.S.

a broad stream floating vessels of 500 tons, stands on a creek the somewhat decayed and unhealthy port, Basra or Bassora, whence Sindbad the Sailor set forth on his adventurous voyages, and, with a population of some 60,000, it still does a good deal of trade as a link between Baghdad and Bombay, to which there are regular steamers. The staple of Basra is the dates that grow in forests around it. Britain has hitherto had the lion's share of its trade, in recent years challenged by a German line of steamers. Farther down, by Mohammera, whose sheikh, claiming to be independent both of Persia and Turkey, has demanded the tribute of a salute from passing vessels, comes in the Persian river Karun, the tide bearing its burden of silt both upwards and downwards. Fifty miles below, the turbid flood discolours the blue water of the Persian Gulf, nearly 600 miles from Baghdad. The mouth

VOL. VI.

is obstructed, for large vessels, by a bar, which suggested as one design of the Baghdad railway's continuation that, now carried down the river to Basra, it might turn southward to the Arabian port El Koweit, which is under British guardianship.

This sketch, it is hoped, will suffice to outline the main features of Mesopotamia, blending as they do with the mountainous country to the north, and the deserts of Arabia on the south. Its productions have been indicated as we followed its two great arteries. Its animal life does not much differ from what we have seen in neighbouring lands presenting the same natural characteristics. The ruins of once stately cities are given up to jackals and hyenas; where cobras and huge lizards bear out the prophet's vision of "a dwelling-place for dragons". Every clump of reeds by the river is a cover for wild boars. The timid

gazelle and other antelopes scour over the rocky plains. The Asiatic lion, smaller than his African brother, holds out upon the mountainous Persian border. Various wild cats lurk wherever they can find cover, descendants of those that once peopled the "paradises" or hunting-parks of the Persian kings. Goats and sheep, both wild and tame, are the cattle of the mountains, as buffaloes of the marshy plains towards the river-mouth. Camels and asses make common beasts of burden, and the swift Arab steed is mingled among sturdier half-breeds. Birds abound, especially on the river-courses, among them such game as the francolin or West Asian pheasant, the quail, the sand-grouse, and the red-legged partridge. Wild fowl swarm in the marshy lakes, where one observer has noted how even the amphibious Arab inhabitants develop long thin legs like storks or herons, and can dive and swim like fish. The Euphrates rears fish so large that a single barbel is described as too much for a camel-load; and on the mud banks of its mouth basks a tiny fish which seems as much at home in the air as in the water. Sharks show themselves a good way up the Shat-el-Arab and its tributaries. Then there is the usual, or even more than usual, allowance of hot-country insect pests, from locusts and scorpions to swarms of the provoking mosquito, who is now convicted of spreading the malarious fever so common in Lower Mesopotamia. But, indeed, pests and pestilences of many kinds have been only too familiar all over Turkey in Asia.

The Allied Council gave Britain a mandate for regulating a country which we took a chief part in rescuing from its bad masters. It still remained in a state of lawless disturbance which obliged us to keep here a large army of mainly Indian troops, and to control the more accessible part through officials practised in colonial administration. The proud Arabs did not readily accept a tutelage that might guide this

new State through internal difficulties to be faced as well as chances of disagreement with their Western advisers. In Mesopotamia, besides Kurds on its mountain boundaries and Assyrians of motley creeds in the north, the ruler has to deal with rival sects of the dominant religion, scouting each other like Orangeman and Papist, as with half-heathen tribes of Shammar Arabs, true sons of Ishmael, not easily to be won to any form of orderly government such as alone can give back to this famous land the prosperity it enjoyed of old. As soon as we had made some progress in stamping out the smouldering fires of warfare that kept blazing up on the edges of devastation, our authorities sought to shape a constitution that might at once satisfy the wishes and ensure the welfare of the people. A provisional Government of native notables was gathered at Baghdad as core for an assembly trusted to represent all interests. By it the Emir Feisal, disappointed of a throne at Damascus, was elected and crowned King of Irak, as is to be the style of this Arab sovereignty centred at Baghdad. At an expense somewhat begrudged by our taxpayers, his rule is being propped up by British officials, who have to keep a firmer hand on the restive borders apt to kick against being harnessed into a new nationality or broken in to any peaceful obedience.

But public spirit and rational freedom are such exotic growths here that the experiment must be a doubtful one. And with civilized powers, also, we have inherited some chance of dispute as to the control of those oil-wells that seem likely to prove Mesopotamia's richest yield. Another important British interest is in the maintenance of a new route to India by a road of 500 miles from the Jordan valley to Hit on the Euphrates. Along this construction can be formed stations for the furtherance of aeroplanes, hitherto barred here by the risks of passing over a stretch of wild mountain and desert.

# ARABIA

## THE PEOPLE

This more famous than populous land again presents the question as to whether it should be treated apart. We have seen how its deserts and their sons encroach across the vaguely-defined frontiers of neighbouring regions. It forms a link, indeed, between Africa and Asia, being in its physical features more akin to the former; and its north-western corner is politically connected with Egypt, while greater stretches have been more or less reduced under Turkish sovereignty. But the country has on the whole such a marked character, and its people have played so notable a part in history, and spread so far from their native soil, that Arabia demands an independent place in our survey of the world, even apart from its new claim to be ranked among modern nations.

The Arabs, like their kinsmen the Jews, are found widely scattered, but under circumstances that have usually given them a masterful rather than a servile place in other lands, over which their blood has been transfused among peoples tempered by their fierce faith. The original lot of Isaac and Ishmael seems strangely reversed. Israel is a down-trodden exile, while the sons of outcast Hagar, conquerors abroad, are firmly settled in the peninsula taken by ethnologists for the cradle of the whole Semitic race, where in a singular degree some of them appear to preserve the manners and thoughts of patriarchal days. There can be distinguished, indeed, two blending Arab stocks, the true Ishmaelites, tall, handsome, bearded, like their Semitic forefathers, and a smaller type with smoother,

flatter faces and sometimes frizzly hair, who seem closer akin to Abyssinians and Egyptians, showing also a negroid strain through slave miscegenation. A people of this name are at least very ancient, being mentioned by Herodotus as contributing a camel-corps to the host of Xerxes, when their land was already noted for its yield of perfumes.

Those remaining in their ancestral seat number only a few millions, enumeration being made specially difficult, not only by the wild independence to which they cling hard, but by an Oriental trait, very marked among the Arabs, which looks on counting of heads or possessions as a vain ostentation, likely to bring ill-luck. An Arab sheikh cannot, or will not, tell the strength of his band, and Turkish statistics as to the population of towns are never to be depended on. Groups of oases and fertile coast-lands form states under princes—entitled Sultan, Imam, or Emir—whose authority, apt to prove shifting and precarious, has often been cut short by murder or intrigue. Arabia has but some half-dozen places of any size, their inhabitants, along with the more sophisticated Arabs settled down as traders or *fellahin*, to be distinguished from the prouder Bedouins in whom rather survive the characteristic qualities of their race. Nomad is an epithet commonly given to these untamed tribes, who sometimes indeed remove to great distances; but as a matter of fact their range is usually a very determined one, fixed by chances of trade or robbery, or oftener by the need of shifting to fresh pastures; and no wanderers are more surely tethered by sentiment to



some roomy haunt which they call home.

The Bedouins are split up into clans and smaller tribes, whose prefix *Ben*, like the Celtic *Mac*, denotes them as tracing their descent from such and such an ancestor. Their government is truly patriarchal, and they always looked askance on the corrupt Turkish authorities to whom they may have had to pay tribute and formal allegiance. The sheikh of a band will usually be chosen from a family of hereditary chiefs; but there is a force of public opinion to depose any head who seems to fall short in justice or generosity, as in dignity or force of character; so popular election may come into play for an office likely to be of more honour than profit, whose authority is as interpreter of the customs and sentiments that make the desert law. In some tribes, Burckhardt says—in all, declares Palgrave—there are judges or cadis recommended by wisdom as well as by right of birth. Other travellers speak of a kind of jury sitting upon doubtful cases. Mr. C. Doughty praises tribal justice as mild and fair, enforced by such penalties as fines of cattle. On the war-path it is customary, as among Red Indian tribes, to appoint as leader some man of his deeds, the civil chief for the nonce retiring into the background; so Mohammed and the early caliphs stayed at Medina, while their generals were sent forth to conquest. Another of several features, by the way, in which the Bedouins resemble the American Indians is their highly-trained ability for following a trail, and reading warning or guidance from slightest indications that would escape a European eye. Both races are alike in their position of what may be called superior barbarianism; but the Bedouins would seem to be less bloodthirsty than the Sioux or Comanche warrior. Their physical frame is lithe and spare, by temperance and exercise made capable of great endurance, with tawny complexions of various shades, black hair worn in greasy plaits, and often full beards; the features well marked, in youth not seldom pleasing, but soon coarsening under the unscreened sun that strains their eyes into a fixed scowl.

In this one respect they show themselves still true children of Ishmael, that their hand is against every man not connected with them by ties of kindred or alliance. The tribes live in a state of chronic feud, often breaking out into war that, like their internal quarrels, is apt to be carried on with more noise and picturesque demonstrativeness than loss of life. As in the case of the Red Indians, while capable of devoted courage by fits, they have a very practical objection to taking risks; and when they catch an enemy at a disadvantage, their hereditary code of chivalry forbids needless slaughter. A battle is fought by rules, like a game, often as a series of single combats, and with spoil rather than bloodshed as its trophy. What has prevented the hostile troops of the desert from exterminating one another, as Burckhardt remarks, is the stern custom that gives the kin of the slain the right and duty of avenging his death on the slayer or his children's children, unless the blood be wiped up by atoning ransom. Though modified by the Koran, as by the law of Moses, this point of honour is so keenly upheld that an Arab does not lightly draw upon himself the inveterate hostility of a blood-feud. Cause for quarrel is always at hand in these hereditary hatreds, in disputes about watering-places and pasturage, and in individual acts of neighbourly aggression, which are like to take the form, so familiar on troubled borders, of "lifting" herds or flocks.

The unregenerate Arab is proud to be an enterprising robber, or in many tribes a clever thief. The plundering of travellers makes one of his favourite exploits, while he is as ready to turn an honest penny by tribute or blackmail paid him for protection, loyally afforded, a single conductor being escort enough through all tribes in kindred or alliance with his own. As children, sporting naked on the hot sand, the boys are sometimes taught to steal like little Spartans; then a youth proves his manhood by a bold and adroit raid upon some hostile camp, which may enable him to set up in life. If caught slinking by night among the enemy's tents, he has no call to be ashamed



Underwood & Underwood

Bedouin Women Churning

of himself, and will be treated by his captors without keen reprobation, held to ransom or arrangement, so long as blood has not been spilt. It is all fair play. Where primitive morals maintain their purity, the bound prisoner is forced formally to renounce the privilege of hospitality, else he has only to touch one of his keepers, to win from an ignorant child a morsel of food or a drink of water, even symbolically to spit in the face of man or child, and he at once establishes his claim to protection as a guest. It will be remembered how deftly and dramatically, in the *Talisman*, Saladin shears off the head of the false knight who is about to drink under his roof.

For not less notoriously it is a point of the Bedouin's religion to be true to his guest

as relentless to his foe. Here, more than elsewhere in the world, "stranger is a holy name". When even an enemy, by certain observances of custom, can trick the tent-owner into temporary service, an unknown visitor has only to present himself to be sure of courteous welcome, and, with any favourable introduction, may find the tribe dispute the honour of entertaining him. This notable hospitality is apt to wear a little thin where a tribe sees much of strangers; and in any case it may not prove inconsistent with the host taking the first chance to plunder his guest, after giving him a fair start into independence; but so long as the stranger, however much at his own invitation, remains in a Bedouin home, its master looks on himself as responsible

## The World of To-day

for his life and property. In general, the Bedouins, unless in the way of their bad business, appear more disposed to be friendly than not. They soon lay aside ill-will, except that of the ancestral vendetta, and are found ready to smile upon the traveller whom an hour before they may have attacked under some unfortunate mistake. Beneath the dignity of their manners there is often disclosed a turn for good-natured sociability, which in the case of youngsters will take lively forms of sport and jest, while any excitement may draw them into a storm of clamour and violent gestures subsiding as quickly as it arose.

The Bedouin's property consists chiefly in horses and camels, in flocks of sheep or goats; cattle are more rarely kept among the hills or in the neighbourhood of towns. His movable home is a tent of black goats' hair, divided by a curtain that secures privacy for his womankind, furnished with pack-saddles, corn-sacks and the water-skins, mortars, hand-mills, coffee-pots, dairy vessels, &c., that are the domestic utensils; sometimes also with handsome carpets. His dress is a cotton shirt, over which he throws a loose mantle called an abba, often of striped pattern, or a thick mantle of sheep-skin worn even in scorching heat; he goes sandalled and barelegged; and over his plaited tresses draws a gay hood, kerchief, turban, or some other thick head-gear. The women affect loose dark cotton gowns; their face-covering varies from a mere strip of veil to a thick mask, more or less completely hiding their fancy for puncturing and staining part of the face and for silver nose- and ear-rings. In some parts of Arabia the wearing of tight trousers is a female privilege, and the men have a kind of kilt. A good deal of finery may be displayed upon occasion by both sexes; but on the war-path or in travelling a Bedouin is apt to strike strangers as clothed chiefly in dirty brown rags. A practised eye, indeed, can distinguish one tribe from another by some peculiarity of costume or equipment. A rich man is little better off than a poor one, except in the ability to exercise plentiful hospitality, a great point of ostentation with

them, or in the possession of superior steeds and weapons. Their home-made arms are a lance or a mace, a scimitar, and a crooked dagger; but, even before modern rifles began to find their way into the deserts, matchlocks and other clumsy firearms had nearly ousted their ancient slings and bows and the elaborate suits of armour that once completed the Arab warrior's array.

A man has commonly no more than one wife, at a time that is, for he enjoys great freedom of divorce, and may from first to last have chosen and rejected many partners, whom he must haggle for with the father, and accept somewhat blindfold, as in the case of Leah and Rachel; and the wife may not have known her husband by name till the wedding-day. Arabian fathers are not always above selling their daughters as concubines. The woman is by no means the better half in an Arab establishment, but rather such a handmaid as we see in the Scriptures. She does not presume to eat but of her lord's leavings; all the drudgery of the tent is thrown on her, while he lolls in the shade, smoking his pipe, playing at a kind of draughts, or generally enjoying his *dolce far niente* till the hour comes for activity in fight or pillage. Black slaves, common in towns, are found also in the tents, who, treated considerately and often freed, must have to some extent alloyed the pure stock. The African slave-trade, though denounced by Turkey and watched by British cruisers, is not yet extinct about the Red Sea.

Coffee and tobacco are the Arabs' chief luxuries; their fare varies with circumstances. Dates make no small part of it, there being at least as many sorts of dates in Arabia as of apples in England, used in different ways, among which perhaps the commonest is as a crushed mass of pulp; then the stones are pounded as fodder for animals. Butter, cheese, and sour milk are always at hand; for feasting there is the flesh of lambs, kids, or even camels, besides the chance of a gazelle or other desert game; and many tribes are in a position to raise or to obtain grain, which they bake into unleavened scones, or use as *burghul*, the

crushed and dried wheat cooked with butter and oil that is a common dish all over Syria. Exchanges with their agricultural neighbours of cheese and butter, of charcoal, gum mastic, aromatic herbs, and other products of the desert, for wheat, barley, coffee, tobacco, &c., is almost their only commerce. Their arts are commonly confined to rude weaving, tanning, and dyeing, to horse-shoeing and saddlery, and to the making of weapons where these cannot be bought or stolen. For all their pride, the sons of the tent are often found with a keen eye for gain, where it is to be got either by bargaining or by the strong hand. Different coins circulate among them in different regions; most often the Turkish silver *mejidies* (about 3s.) and piastres, but in the mountainous south, Indian coins and Maria Theresa dollars *alias* rials (2s.), the latter specially coined for the conservative markets of the Arabian Sea.

Honour rather than honesty is the true Arab's strong point. With some demerits, that strike an unrecommended stranger, he is much of a gentleman, but religious principle seems not very congenial to him. As a rule, he is by no means bigoted in his Mohammedanism, neglectful of prayers, not well provided with priests, sometimes keeping the fasts of his faith, but readier at the feasts, for which he provides excuse by vowing to sacrifice a sheep or a camel on any perilous emergency. There are copies of the Koran for those who can read them, a considerable proportion in the less wild tribes; but the young men, at least, listen more eagerly to legendary tales of love and war chanted by minstrels to the twanging of a rude guitar. The Koran itself indeed abounds in passages appealing to the carnal man, like such episodes as that of David and Goliath in our Scriptures. The truth appears to be that, away from mosques and mollahs, the Bedouin tends always to relapse into the heathendom from which he was raised by the call of his Prophet. Free-born pride with him is a stronger motive than piety; and he despises Christians no more than he does the orthodox Osmanli, who have excited his bitterer hatred as galling



A Typical Bedouin

oppressors. One of our best books of Arabian travel, for all its curious style, is Mr. C. M. Doughty's, who made his lonely way among the wild tribes without concealing that he was a Christian; but in towns he encountered more fanatic ill-will.

Among this somewhat undevout race, when still they "worshipped stocks and stones", burst forth that most volcanic eruption of faith to spread so rapidly over a great part of the world, hardening into such rigid lines. The rise, indeed, of Islam makes one of the strangest episodes in human history. That an ignorant camel-driver should have been able to sublimate the vague legends of kindred peoples into a new religion, to cast down the idols of his native land, to wear out the obstinate prejudices of his kinsmen and enemies, to coin an elaborate revelation, and above all to deceive himself into what was apparently an honest enthusiasm if alloyed by fanatic arts, shows Mohammed to have been no

ordinary man. Students of history who do not share Carlyle's boisterous reverence for success may note crises at which the fate of this new religion seemed to hang by a hair, and names of other Arabian prophets, "boasting themselves to be somewhat", who, under the same favouring conditions, might have made converts by the million. Perhaps the truth is that a natural ebullition of human nature had here the chance of crystallizing itself round the masterfully attractive character of a teacher whose hot gospel was not too high for it, and who soon could lead his followers not only to belief but to domination and plunder. This unlettered poet had conceived a religion of pride, not of sorrow, one which has appealed to lustful warriors rather than to the weary and heavy laden, and which has never had the same ennobling influence on that sympathetic sex, "first at the cross and last at the grave"; but it is clear that his protest against pagan idolatry owed something to Christian as to Jewish teachings.

It was in A.D. 622 that Mohammed fled to Medina from the persecutions of the sacred Koreish tribe to which he belonged by birth; this is the *Hegira*, from which dates the Moslem Calendar. As yet so little of a prophet in his own country, he had only ten years more to live; but in so short space he gathered an army of converts; he returned to Mecca in triumph and cast out the idols from its ancient shrine, the Kaaba; he consolidated his own creed, and made himself the centre of an Arabian nationality which soon began to play its fierce part in history. His immediate successors, "the Caliphs", were able to send out fanatical swarms that in twenty years more swept over Syria, Persia, and Egypt, overthrowing effete societies and planting the Crescent in place of time-honoured symbols. In the next generation the worldly side of this conquering faith came to overlay its spiritual elements. From the first, disputes as to the caliphate had opened the great schism between the followers of Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, and those of his elected successors. Murder, tyranny, and civil war mingled coarser passions with those of early

enthusiasm. The rival leaders, enervated by luxurious spoil, fixed their seats outside the bounds of Arabia; and its choicest warriors emigrated to richer fields of domination. Before long the Bedouins fell back into their simple state of disunited clans; the glories of Arabian science, literature, and art rose to flourish in foreign lands; and the holy places of Islam remained as its strongest link with the land of its birth.

The creed and the nation thus self-exiled went on spreading over the southern regions of Asia and the northern part of Africa, reached even into outlying quarters of Europe, where for a time the supremacy of the Cross was threatened. Beaten back from the Pyrenees and held in check on the Danube, Mohammedanism found wide ground for extension in other directions. To innumerable tribes of dark-minded heathen it proved a step in civilization; and the mass of easily absorbed converts added to its own momentum. But there is a certain want of spiritual energy and of expansive power which in the end makes this religion a curse rather than a blessing. It acts as a sedative to the conscience and a stimulant to the passions. Its frame of formal observances stifles the growth of the human mind that at first may be fostered by its warmth. Its sensual hopes and fears too easily cheat the heart out of wholesome self-knowledge. Its sluggish fatalism is readily adapted as an instrument for tyrants. So Moslem domination shows itself almost everywhere a rusty fetter upon the souls of its votaries.

At various times and places a fresh upheaval of the same lurid moral force has given forth more fire than sweetness and light; and at the present moment there is a smouldering revival of Islam that may yet blaze up over a good part of the world. The most remarkable and effective of these revivals rose in Arabia itself, about the middle of our eighteenth century, when the learned and pious Abd-el Wahab began to preach what may be called a Puritan version of the faith. This reformer denounced modern indifferentism, went back, like Luther, to the original documents of belief,

insisted upon its native austerity, denounced the superstitions that had encrusted it, frowned at the pretentious architecture of dome and minaret, and, going beyond the temperance of Mohammed, forbade the use of tobacco as well as of wine. As in the original movement, conviction was urged by force of arms, and the political again overlaid the religious side of fanaticism. The Wahabis, as they were called, became a formidable power, Bedouin tribes once more rallying to their standard, till a great part of Arabia was for a time united in a state that at first had righteousness and orthodoxy for its motto, and that threatened to renew the caliphs' victorious career. The capture of Mecca, their holy city, roused the Turks to resistance. In the early part of last century ambitious Egyptian pashas

drove back the Wahabis from the coast of Arabia, and their authority has since been confined to the central highlands. The power founded by them is said to be dwindling, it has certainly split up into two or three rival states; but of late there have appeared signs that Wahabism may take a fresh political extension, yet may prove to have lost the exalted temper that was its title to loyalty. A more recent revival of Moslem theocracy and morals, at the call of a teacher named Senussi, had its rise in the African deserts; but this appears to have spread into Arabia as all over the world of Islam. In its southern mountain region holds out an ancient Zeidi sect, that split off from the Shiah body without fully incorporating itself with the here prevalent Sunnite orthodoxy.

## THE COUNTRY

The Arabian peninsula is 1200 miles long by about half that breadth, making an area of a million square miles; but to this may be added the Syrian desert between the Lebanon and the Euphrates, into which extend the same features and inhabitants. The general character of the country is that of a bare plateau from 2000 to 5000 feet high, with a varied surface expressed in the old names *Arabia Petraea*, *Arabia Deserta*, and *Arabia Felix*. On the whole it is justly proverbial as a barren thirsty land, where rain will often be unknown for years, and over the greatest part of it there are no perennial rivers, only the stream-beds called *wadys*, flushed for a time by occasional storms. Hence so much of the land is an arid waste, shingly or gravelly in the north, as a rule, sandy in the south, made fertile only by wells or reservoirs which supply life-blood to the oases. These, indeed, might often be much extended if the Bedouins were more given to cultivation. The richest regions here, contrary to the experience of our temperate climate, are the highlands, that catch the ocean cloud-currents, and can profit, in most years, by

periodical rains, coming in summer on the west coast, and on the other side in winter.

A belt of mountains and scarped edges of the central upland runs all down the shore of the Red Sea, rising to some 8000 feet, or higher in the south-west corner, Yemen, which was well named the fortunate division of Arabia. Between this and another range behind the south-eastern promontory of Oman, lies unexplored what seems the largest and most hopeless expanse of desert, stretching almost across the peninsula. In the north also deserts prevail upon Syrian and Mesopotamian borders. The central upland, known as the Nejd (highlands), is seamed by ridges, of which the northern range, Jebel Shammar (about 6000 feet), appears to be the highest. This elevated region, enjoying a temperate climate, is the seat of the Wahabi power; to the north of which a formidable split was made by the Emir of Shammar, whose authority, though of recent and sanguinary origin, seemed to have become the most potent force among the independent Arabs; but of late a young and stirring Emir of Nejd has put himself forward for this position by forcibly driving

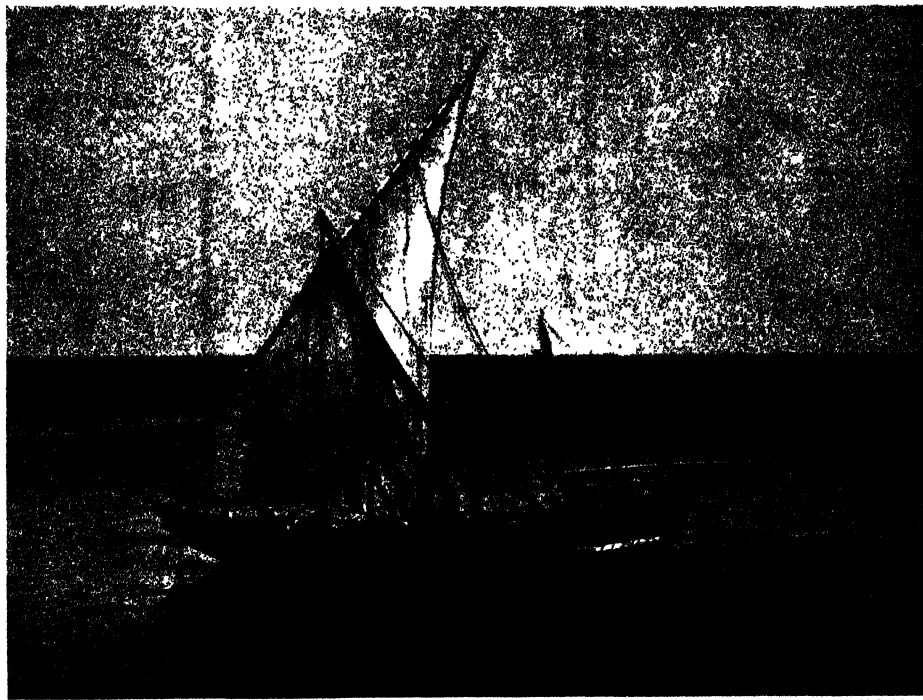
## The World of To-day

the Turks out of the coast strip of El Hasa along the Persian Gulf, and trying to extend his rule over the small central State of Kasim, traversed by a great wady, whose stream, if perennial, would be the chief river of Arabia. These two principal potentates have as vassals or neighbours chiefs of petty districts little in touch with the world outside.

The desert is not always so dismal as it is painted. North of Jebel Shammar extends the redoubtable Nefud belt that strikes awe even to Bedouin hardihood. Palgrave describes this as "an immense ocean of loose reddish sand, unlimited to the eye, and heaped up in enormous ridges running parallel to each other from north to south, undulation after undulation, each swell two or three hundred feet in average height, with slant sides and rounded crests furrowed in every direction by the capricious gales of the desert. In the depths between, the traveller finds himself as it were imprisoned in a suffocating sand-pit, hemmed in by burning walls on every side; while at other times, labouring up the slope, he overlooks what seems a vast sea of fire, swelling under a heavy monsoon wind, and ruffled by a cross-blast into little red-hot waves. Neither shelter nor rest for eye or limb amid torrents of light and heat poured from above on an answering glare reflected below!" This was in summer; in winter, Lady Anne Blunt found the Nefud no such nightmare scene, and she accentuates the bright hue of its sands, turned by rain or dew to crimson, with a general aspect of dirty red waves, their troughs often taking the form of deep horse-hoof hollows. At this season the soil was tufted with bushes and vine-like creepers, many parts being skimmed over with rough camel pasture and even grasses for sheep. Other desert plains she compares to rolling Wiltshire downs, on which in June the grass withers white, to be revived by the rains of autumn. Often, indeed, the sand may be bare of all but the scrubbiest vegetation, its brown or blindingly snow-like surface showing the tracks of the gazelles, panthers, or wolves that are its chief inhabitants. Sometimes

the waste takes the form of shifting sand-hills, or ridges and furrows; again it may be smooth as a table. Here the camels' feet crunch into a brittle surface of salt or nitre, there upon cakes of clay curled up by the heat like drain-pipes; elsewhere the plain is strewn with shingle, littered by black volcanic stones, "as though a gigantic coal-scuttle had been upset", or spangled with grains of white quartz. Here and there are stretches of lava, wrinkled into stiff waves. Sand-storms come oftener than thunder-showers, but the deadly effects of the simoom here appear to have been exaggerated by some travellers; while the stifling *khamzin* wind, that chokes the pores and clogs the spirits with its burden of heat and sand, is a most unpleasant experience. The chief peril of the desert lies in the scarcity of wells, between which voyagers must steer their course.

Exaggeration, indeed, appears natural in this climate, where at midday all outlines are apt to be confused or magnified in shimmering heat; but at morning and evening craggy heights a day's journey off stand out through the clear air as if close at hand, to be shot with gorgeous colours by ineffable sunsets; then at night the sky is glorified by the sapphire brilliancy of constellations or of the zodiacal light that here shines like a phosphorescent scar. The very desolation of nature often bears an impressive aspect in its vastness. It is small wonder if bold spirits find excitement in a desert journey, for all its trials. Professor Palmer, not long before his cruel murder by Bedouins, satirically suggested an arrangement for enjoying such travel at home. "You get a huge cucumber frame and walk about under it, while blast-furnaces are lighted around you. From a number of holes, hot-air and fine sand are blown into your face. After eight hours you sit down to a piece of boiled boot, washed down with warm ditch water." The nights are often fresh or even cold after a sweltering day; the clear atmosphere causing rapid radiation from the scorched sand; indeed the climate may be described as one of alternate frying and freezing. Heavy mists and



Donald M'Leish

An Arab Dhow in the Red Sea

dews do something to make up for the want of rain. The high uplands are brisk and invigorating; and in winter they may be swept by icy blasts and scuds of snow, that lies only on lofty summits. Pierre Loti declares that, a day's march from the frontier of Palestine, he began to miss a certain crispness and purity which the air has in the depths of the wilderness.

Though some parts of the desert appear blighted by stones or by mineral impregnation, much of it might rather be called a steppe land, which bears not only coarse pasture, but a crop of aromatic plants deliciously scenting the air after rain. From it we get such productions as myrrh, balsam, aloes, senna, and gums. One curious growth is a kind of truffle, much loved by the Bedouins, with a mealy root that has been conjectured to be the Biblical manna, rather than the exudation known under this

name. Prickly acacias and other shrubs are found that yield a particularly fine charcoal. Larger trees are rare till we get into the cultivated portions, where the date and other palms make the predominant growth. Other fruits, melons, beans, barley, and tobacco are grown, also millet, sesame, cotton, indigo, and sugar-canes, some of these only on the warm and watered coastlands. The mountain country, once renowned for its gold, seems now poor in metals; but some valuable stones may be found, such as cornelian, agate, and onyx. The most famous product, as an article of commerce, is, of course, coffee, that grows best in the mountainous south-west region, not much of it, indeed, now exported. Coffee is used all over Arabia by those who can come by it, dozens of tiny cups, without milk or sugar, being often taken in the course of the day; and the brewing of it



is the first act of hospitality. The shoots of a bitter herb called *kat* are also in local esteem as a deleterious stimulant, chewed with the fumes of the hubble-bubble; and the smoking, as well as swallowing, of *hashish*, Indian hemp, makes a more pernicious indulgence than tobacco. As in neighbouring Mohammedan countries, *leben*, sour milk, is drunk with a slightly exhilarating effect in place of wine; and *ghee*, clarified butter, is another favourite beverage.

Coffee, now grown in so many parts of the world that afford the requisite union of heat and moisture, has not famed Arabia more than its horses, whose breed is also so widely spread. In its native home the Arabian horse is small, standing 14 to 15 hands, not so swift as the English race-horse that boasts his blood, but more enduring. Bay and grey are the commonest colours. The race is said to be degenerating, from want of care in breeding, and from the exportation of fine specimens. We have all heard of the Bedouin's affection for his horse; how it is almost a member of the family, contracting gentleness and trust in man from its foalhood; and what noble efforts it will put forth at the call of its master. *She*—for it is a point of dignity to mount a mare—is usually ridden in a halter without bit or stirrups; and connoisseurs report the Arab less skilful as a jockey than as a trainer. Besides coarser nags, the tribes have a particularly strong breed of asses and mules.

In the desert the horse is not so valuable as the camel, here a universal beast of burden, recommended by its strength and its power of going long distances without water, on the prickliest of pasturage, though its grazing is a slow business that much delays travel. This useful animal, indeed, as well as susceptibilities of temper, has delicacies of constitution often causing a break-down; and on desert tracks no sight is more common than the bones of camels fallen never to rise again, overcome by cold or fatigue. A burdened camel will do 20 to 30 miles a day, 3 miles an hour being good going; but the choice *delul*, used for

riding at speed, may cover 100 miles at a pinch. A camel can carry up to 1000 lb., and has often two passengers on board balancing one another in litters, or sitting *tandem*, back and front. The camel of Arabia is of course the one-humped dromedary, which bears much the same relation to the stronger two-humped Bactrian camel as a nag to a cart-horse. Ugly and ill-tempered as it is, there seems often to be no small affection shown between the camel and its owner, who decks out with fringes, beads, and jingling bells the ungainly neck which it bends down to give the agile rider "a leg up" into the saddle, that makes such a jolting seat for unpractised travellers.

As to animal life, besides flocks and studs, Arabia has more wild beasts than might be expected to find cover on its deserts. The bushy ground harbours hares and foxes; panthers, hyenas, and jackals are common; and even the lion is not unknown. Gazelles, antelopes, and ostriches scud shyly from oasis to oasis. Monkeys and apes swarm in the hills, as do conies, civet-cats, and the jerboa and jerbilla rats that pit stony ground with their burrows. Great carrion-birds swoop down upon their prey, far seen in the desert, where sand-grouse, quails, and partridges render falconry a favourite Arab sport. Some parts are infested by serpents, scorpions, and other venomous creatures. Locusts are very numerous, but must be hard put to it to pick up a living from the desert, where, on the other hand, they supply food to both man and beast, being easily caught when heavy with the dew on their wings, and lying so thick that horses and camels can graze on them, or crowds of them may be stifled by setting fire to the coarse herbage. Lady Anne Blunt declares that they supply the place of vegetables, having a taste like green wheat. In the towns they are sold in baskets and barrels, like shrimps. Honey is another production of the desert, which enters much into the composition of Arab luxuries. A good deal of fishing employs the coast people, and there is a demand for dried fish among the adjacent Bedouin tribes.

Great cities, as may have already been

gathered, are not to be looked for in Arabia. The most important communities will be found on or near the coast as we follow its contour of 4000 miles from the Euphrates to the Suez Canal.

In Mesopotamia, Baghdad and Bassora were mainly Arab towns under Turkish government. Inland from the Persian Gulf, some parts of the El Hasa plain, over which the Porte's pretensions to sovereignty till lately extended, appear to be well watered, providing plenty of pasture. On the coast the people have to be content with fishing, now that their former trade of piracy has been put down by British cruisers acting as the police of this sea. Near the head of the Gulf, Koweit is known as a port from which Arabian horses are shipped to India and elsewhere; and this town might acquire new importance by the pushing on to it of the Baghdad railway. It has already become worth quarrelling about, its sheikh showing willingness to shake off the yoke of Turkey, and to put himself under the protection of Britain, while other naval powers kept an eye on what may prove a bone of contention among them, and what threatened to become a focus of rebellion against the Porte's vague authority.

Below this territory stretches the coast-strip of El Hasa, recently annexed by the Nejd Emir. Its chief place inland is El Hof-huf, a group of oasis villages, which, according to some accounts, make one of the largest masses of population in Arabia. The people of El Hasa have an exceptional turn for art, notably shown in their inlaying of silver upon wood.

A deep bay about half-way down the Persian Gulf contains the island of Bahrein and its archipelago, the head-quarters of pearl-fishing in these hot waters. The islands are now independent under British protection; at one time they were a prize of Portuguese adventure; and the late Mr. Theodore Bent's examination of their sepulchral mounds goes to prove that here was long ago a seat of Phœnician commerce. Beyond the bold promontory of Katar comes an island-fringed stretch of what used to be known as the Pirate Coast,

now tamed under sheikhs more or less controlled by Britain.

Thus we pass to the considerable State of Oman, which occupies the south-east end of Arabia, and for a time, by its maritime enterprise, held the dependency of Zanzibar and other territory on the African mainland, as well as on the opposite coast of Persia. Its ruler is the Sultan, or Imam, of Muscat, a good harbour on the Gulf of Oman, which half a century ago was called the largest place in Arabia; but its cosmopolitan population has much dwindled of late, and the present sultan exercises little authority beyond his half-ruined city, once a Portuguese possession. Lately, indeed, he had to be guarded by British-Indian troops against fanatical rebels pressing on him from the interior. Muscatel grapes are said to take their name from Muscat, whose volcanic rocks now show so brown and bare beneath such a sun that this bears the name of being the hottest port in the world.

The Oman territory nominally extends for some distance as a narrow strip round the southern coast. The greenest spot on the Arabian Sea's arid shore appears to be the Gara Hills, behind a central bay, among which has been collected the frankincense gum, once so celebrated a product of this country. Along a line of over a thousand miles, the best port, and that a bad one, is Makalla, whose chief inhabitants are Parsees, and it has a close connection with India, where its Arab prince at present lives in the service of the Nizam. The mountainous region behind is the Hadramaut, a name strictly belonging to its great central valley, which stretches for a hundred miles or so parallel to the coast, then opens southward to drain the dribble of many wadys into the sea by the Mesileh River. This little-visited region, to which rain once in two or three years is a godsend, made part of the old Arabia Felix, proverbial for riches in the ancient world; it is now thinly peopled by pastoral hill tribes of far from idyllic manners, among whom Mr. and Mrs. Bent were astonished to find petty chiefs housed in imposing castles of architecture suggesting a once much higher civilization.



An Outpost of Empire: street scene, Aden

Shibam was the seat of the most powerful and enlightened of these sultans. The land rises in mountain terraces, from which some considerable streams come down to the sea, watering spots of luxuriant vegetation.

Behind, to the north, extends the greatest mass of utter desert, hardly traversible and still almost a blank on our maps, known to the Arabs as "The Sand" or Ruba' el Khali (Abode of Emptiness). It covers nearly all the south of the peninsula, and stretches up to the central highlands.

Near the south-west corner of the coastline comes the British territory of Aden, which, with the small island of Perim, guarding the Straits of Bab el Mandeb, and the larger African island, Socotra, far out in the Arabian Sea, make outposts of our Indian Empire. The town and harbour of Aden, that Gibraltar of the East, is the point of Arabia best known to Englishmen, since all steamers make some stay here, boarded by naked mop-headed Somali boys peddling ostrich feathers and other Eastern curiosities, and showing off their skill in diving after the smallest coin. This important coaling-station, with 70 square miles

of adjacent territory, has a motley population of over 40,000. The land-locked bay is shut in by a mass of black volcanic rock, strongly fortified, below which are Steamer Point and the native harbour, while the town itself stands above, in the throat of an extinct crater, having as its great sight the enormous ancient tanks on which it partly depends for water. Like Gibraltar, this ring of "torn and ragged spurs" is joined by a sandy isthmus to the mainland mass of contorted peaks; then round the bay, a few miles off, projects a similar promontory called "Little Aden", acquired by us since our first conquest at the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign. Aden is a very old harbour, which has seen many chances of war and trade. It is believed to be the Eden mentioned in Ezekiel; but our soldiers garrisoned there are more apt to compare it to a Scriptural locality of very different name, from which the forcible language of the barrack-room declares it to be separated by only a sheet of brown paper. Sir Edwin Arnold stigmatizes Aden as "the driest, most sterile, most savagely-forbidding spot on which man ever settled";

while some whose lot has been cast here report it as having a fairly healthy climate for those who will take precautions, and not such a bad station once one has got over the first impression of barrenness. Cigarettes seem to be its one production.

Behind Aden, this south-western corner is Yemen, "Araby the Blest", long cursed by Turkish misrule, yet still richest and most populous province of the peninsula, a country of great upland plains, broken by black ledges of rock and high sugar-loaf peaks torn into fantastic pinnacles, above glens filled with flowers and blossoms, where the precipices are wreathed in creepers, and the villages on the heights look over stretches of field and orchard that seem paradise to eyes parched in the desert. Refreshed by both spring and autumn rains, this lofty region has gushing streams and wells, and the water is stored up in tanks of solid construction, showing the antiquity of its flourishing culture.<sup>1</sup> This is the native home of the coffee-plant, whose glossy green leaves and white flowers may be seen displayed on the terraced slopes, which for further produce have indigo and other dyes, grain, cotton, fruit, and vegetables. Before Mohammed, Christianity had taken root here, but was extirpated by a persecution so cruel as to be reprobated in the Koran. Saba, believed to be the Sheba of Solomon's admiring visitor, was a seat of ancient Arabian worship, where the ruins of a great irrigation dam attest a culture older than our era. Marib, a later town on this site, was once the capital of Yemen, a place now taken by Sanaa, a hundred miles to the west, whose old and new fortifications and dilapidated palaces

stand over 7000 feet above the sea, with an invigorating climate and a belt of well watered greenery. Estimates of its dwindling population vary between 20,000 and 40,000, one quarter filled with Jews, who are here despised but tolerated for their skill and industry. Sanaa was once noted for copper and brass work, still to be seen in its bazaars, that now make a show of European as well as native fabrics, boots, gramophones, and other novel importations, as readily adopted by this people as our improved fire-arms. A few miles off is the Arab town of Roda, among vineyards whose juice finds favour on the sly with imperfect Moslems.

The most flourishing place in Yemen is its port Hodeidah, with a motley population of about 40,000, including a hundred or so Europeans and a good many British Indians taking a prominent part in trade. It has quite supplanted the decayed Mocha in the export of coffee, not now so much shipped from this coast as are hides and skins brought down from the mountains, among which a fair road and telegraph wires thread the 150 miles way to Sanaa. In one of its fits of energy, the Turkish Government undertook to form a new harbour near Hodeidah, from which a French company began a railway up to the capital, but this attempt stuck fast, even before it had got across the arid and unhealthy plain called the Tehama stretching between the Yemen highlands and the Red Sea. North of Hodeidah, Kamaran Island has been used as a quarantine station for pilgrims; then farther up the coast come the Farsan Islands, on which petroleum is found.

Yemen was the southern province of the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Walter B. Harris, one of the few modern travellers through Yemen, gives this sample of its charming scenery: "Below me lay the great valley up the straight course of which we had been travelling for the last two nights. Over its green fields floated a transparent hazy mist, through which I would watch the river sparkling and flashing like a silver serpent, as it passed on its way to the desert and the sea. Along its bank the dark-foliaged trees stood out clear and defined. On either side of this silver streak lay terraced fields, rising step by step from the water's edge to where the mountain-slopes became too steep for cultivation. Here they were covered with thick jungle undergrowth, while above

rose precipice upon precipice, crowned, thousands of feet in the pink morning sky, by broken crags and pinnacles of rock, touched with snow. At my very feet, for I was on the house-top, the villagers, rejoicing in the glorious morning, were passing out to their labours, and the flocks and herds bleated as they sought their pasturage. Women carrying beakers wended their way to the spring; while the men, spears in hand, their long glossy black locks tumbling in unrestrained glory over the shoulders, added a fierce element to a scene of the most perfect peace and beauty. It was worth all the desert travel and all the dangers of our night-marches to see what I saw then. This was Arabia Felix!"

Turkish rule, never undisputed after a long and troubled independence under Imams claiming descent from the Prophet and local Sherifs hard to bring into subjection. In the middle of the nineteenth century the Turks made a conquest of this province, upheld by an army that had to deal with chronic rebellions, Sanaa being repeatedly besieged. Harassing service in Yemen was looked on as a hard fate by troops and officials usually in arrears of pay, while the civil and military authorities were apt not to pull together, a common hitch in the gear of Turkish government. Turkey at last grew so sick of her efforts at domination here, that after suppressing a widespread insurrection in 1911, she gave up all but nominal authority to the rebellious Imam, his rule ill-welcomed by townfolk, since for the Turkish civil code he substituted that stricter law of Islam known as the Sheria, very galling to Young Turks who more or less secretly hold the Prophet's injunctions not "up to date".

To the north of Yemen lies Asir, where the rule both of the Porte and the Imam had been subverted by another religious pretender, Sheikh Idrisi, who made great headway with help from the Italians in their late war over Tripoli, when they blockaded the Tehama coast; and the ambitious Emir of Nejd was also thought inclined to push his power to this side of the peninsula.

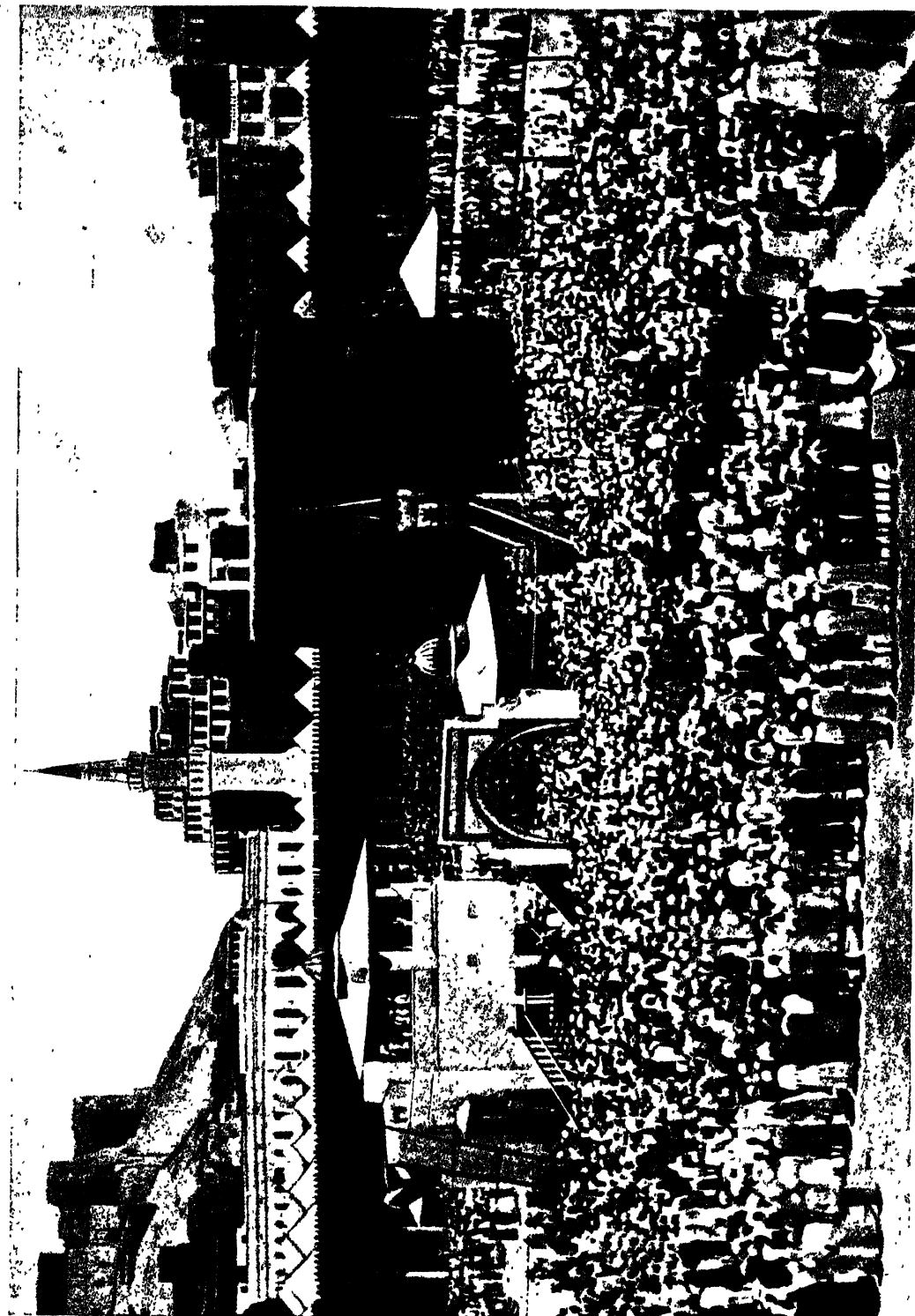
Beyond comes the northern El Hedjaz province, in the background of which are the Nejd central uplands, breeding-place of the finest Arabs, four-legged and two-legged. The chief places here appear to be Riad, main seat of the Wahabite power, and, on the north side, Hail, capital of the Shammar emir, the territory of Kasim, with its capital, Boreida, lying between them. There are other considerable towns hidden in the Nejd oases; but, cut off by a girdle of deserts, these independent states have little intercourse with the rest of Arabia, and are known to us only from hasty observations of a few bold visitors like Mr. Doughty, whose famous account of his travels is now republished in a sumptuous form. On the east, between

the Nejd and the Persian Gulf, stretches the great Dahna desert of gravelly plains and sand-belts, running down to the Ruba' el Khali wilderness.

The Hedjaz was to Turkey an important possession as containing the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, mastership of which gave the Sultan his undeserved title as successor of the Caliphs and head of Islam. His authority here, however, vaguely limited on the inland side, showed as little more than a galling military occupation; and the pasha from Stamboul was held in less reverence than the Grand Sherif of Mecca, hereditary guardian of the sacred shrines. In 1916, this personage took advantage of the world-wide commotion to proclaim Arab independence and himself King of the Hedjaz, a title he might raise to that of Sultan of Arabia, could he win the allegiance of rival claimants to religious and political authority.

Mecca is the Jerusalem of the Moham-medan world, from all parts of which it draws so many pilgrims, chiefly for one great annual assemblage shifting in date through the seasons, since the Moslem year goes by lunar months. The Holy City's nearest port is Jeddah, about half-way up the Red Sea, its harbour obstructed by coralline reefs, from which the town is solidly built "like an ancient model carved in ivory". It has a sacred place of its own in the vicinity, where a low enclosure contains a building known as "Eve's Tomb". Its note and thriving are due to the pilgrims who come and go here by tens of thousands, the dregs from this annual invasion making a strange blend of population, among which are not a few British Indian subjects.

The forty miles of road up to Mecca is in the pilgrimage season one continuous stream of wayfarers, protected against Bedouin raids by a chain of military posts. Since the days of steam, the number of pilgrims who come by sea had much increased, the firm of Cook having started an agency at Jeddah for the forwarding of true believers. Else the great duty of a Moslem was commonly accomplished by joining himself on to one of three great caravan



The Holy Dishes of Tolomeo the Great. Rome.

processions formed at Damascus, Cairo, and Baghdad, the last crossing the desert through the help of tanks established by Zobeide, the wife of Haroun Alraschid. The perils of this long journey are lessened by company, and by a system of paying blackmail to the great Bedouin sheikhs; but without due protection, the pilgrim may expect to be robbed, if not murdered, at the hands of his fellow-believers; and he is sure to be preyed on by officials, touts, contractors, and the host of beggars that swarm like jackals about the caravan. Even rich men sometimes make the journey on foot, for the sake of pious humility; and many are the poor wayfarers who perish, their shallow graves marking these high-roads of Arabia. The sea passage is, perhaps, more dangerous, so closely are herds of ill-equipped devotees packed on board like cattle, often penniless, crippled by age or infirmity, or worn out by fatigue, bringing among them the germs of diseases bred among that huge congregation. Mohammed little foresaw for how many of his faithful disciples he was shortening the way to their paradise when he enjoined on them such a journey, through which the believer lays up for himself not only reward in the next world but lifelong consideration on earth as an honoured *Hadj*i who has duly performed the *Hadj*.

The hardships of this pilgrimage counting as merit, it seems a question whether Islam have not backslided in abridging them by the construction of a sacred railway from Damascus, for which funds were contributed in all Moslem countries. By 1908 this narrow-gauge line was completed as far as Medina, giving a four days' journey over a thousand miles or so, on a great part of which no house is visible except the rare stations, some of them protected by forts, trenches, and barbed-wire against Bedouin hostility. The continuation from Medina to Mecca, and thence to the coast, has been delayed, a matter of no consequence to tourists, as neither Christians nor Jews were to be carried by it. Even short of Medina, the European engineers were turned off, only true believers being allowed to work on the line, a fact perhaps accounting for

its being so badly laid that soon after its opening Mr. Wavell saw several engines stranded in the desert by having run off the rails. We can guess how its working was interrupted during the war. The point beyond which no infidel might pass is Medain Salih on the outer frontier of the Hedjaz, a place cursed like Sodom and Gomorrah in Christian legend, but still marked as a "Troglodyte city" by the extraordinary cave-dwellings, temples and monuments cut out in its sandstone crags, so well described by Mr. Doughty.

Mecca was a sacred Arab shrine long before Mohammed made it centre for a new devotion, towards which reverent eyes are turned in prayer from China to Guinea. He himself had religiously circled the Kaaba, as is the first duty of every pilgrim. This solid oblong structure, about 40 feet high, believed to have been built by Abraham, is veiled under a rich black cloth annually renewed, the old one being cut up to be sold in shreds at fancy prices. Once a year it is cleaned out; but those admitted to the dim interior find nothing remarkable. It makes a huge altar, "the Ear of God", round which the devotees, lightly clad in two cotton garments like bath towels, barefoot, and with shaven heads, as sign of penitence, trot or stalk seven times on the marble pavement worn slippery by millions of feet, uttering pious ejaculations and pressing forward to kiss a blackened stone at the corner, which may indeed have fallen from heaven as a meteorite. Around this are several small pavilions, one of which covers the well Zem-Zem, taken for that revealed to Hagar in the wilderness. The water has a slight medicinal taste and effect, like Epsom salts; it is also suspected of being tainted by sewage; but the pilgrims lose no chance of drinking and being doused by it, carrying away precious bottles full, and a sheet soaked in the water to serve them as shroud.

The Kaaba stands in the centre of a large quadrangle enclosed by colonnades and arcades, at night lit up by innumerable lamps, and at all hours of night and day, in the pilgrimage season, frequented by

reverent groups or crowds whose enthusiasm sometimes ferments into scenes like those of a revival meeting. Each sect or school of believers has its special rendezvous in the enclosure, the Shi'ahs being looked on askance by the orthodox majority, and the Wahabis, it is said, showing a Puritan contempt of more ritualist worshippers. No one durst enter these precincts with his shoes on, or spit within them, or prostrate himself without turning his feet from the Kaaba. Among the thousands of people here engaged in their religious exercises, rush hurricanes of sacred pigeons, swooping down on the grain with which it is a pious duty to feed them; and this temple is also haunted by swallows, whose mud nests defile its domes, minarets, and archways. Moslem bigotry has a soft side for birds.

It would take a long chapter to describe all the minute religious observances through which the pilgrims work themselves up to a heat of devotion, and the absurd legends by which their credulity is full fed at the many "holy places" about Mecca. The concluding ceremonies of the pilgrimage come at Mount Arafat, some hours' march outside the city, whither the whole host marches in straggling procession to cover the hill for a densely-packed mile, till the remission of their sins is proclaimed in a general uproar, with the waving of white upper garments by the frenzied multitude. After nightfall begins a noisy letting off of cannons, guns, and fireworks, in which some cannot fail to be hurt; and next day brings a great sacrificing of rams, goats, and other victims that go to make a general feast, the pilgrim hitherto being bound not to kill so much as a flea. There is also to be gone through with due zeal a function of "stoning the devil" in the Valley of Muna;

then, after a last prayerful visit to the Kaaba, the new-titled Hadjis can set out for the distant homes where they will have something to talk about and hold up their heads over all the rest of their lives, if they are lucky enough to come back safe and sound. The insanitary conditions of the town, the hardships undergone by its throng of visitors in their senseless austerities, and the refuse of thousands of slaughtered animals, left to be cleared away by the next violent storm, render the holy city a focus for spreading cholera, plague, and small-pox through Moslem nations.<sup>1</sup>

Mecca lies among barren hills and valleys over 40 miles inland, built on slopes so as to suggest Bath, with a hot, dry climate in which the crowds of pilgrims have been known to die from cholera at the rate of a thousand a day. Its 60,000 or 70,000 residents live mainly on the visitors who may drop in throughout the year, and during the short pilgrim season turn the city into a "Holy Fair", at least doubling the population; nearly 200,000 are said to have assembled in one year, but the numbers vary, and appear to be decreasing. Then the Meccans, who bear a bad name for greed, reap their harvest by acting as guides and masters of religious ceremonies to these strangers, and by letting crowded lodgings, the highest prices being charged for rooms with windows looking into the Kaaba enclosure; they find, also, a sale for rosaries and other instruments of Moslem devotion. The richer citizens have retreats at Taif, a loftily situated, garden-set town to the east, from which a line of mountains runs into the central highlands of Nejd, where so much still awaits enterprising travellers.

Medina, several days' march north of Mecca, is a smaller town visited also for its

<sup>1</sup> As is well known, the acute fanaticism prevailing at Mecca, and the religious excitement prevalent among the pilgrims, made it death for an unbeliever caught spying upon those mysteries. The few Christians who have witnessed them, Burckhardt, Burton, and others, did so in disguise, at the risk of their lives in case of discovery. When Gibbon declared that all our accounts of Mecca were at second-hand, he did not show Macaulay's acquaintance with trivial literature. In 1704 came out the story of Joseph Pitts, a sailor boy from Topsham,

who, taken by Algerine corsairs, was in his teens beaten into Moslem orthodoxy, and duly performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, his account of which harmonizes with those of later travellers, and seems to be authentic. One of the latest intruders was Mr. A. J. B. Wavell, who made the pilgrimage passing as a native of Zanzibar, and has to tell us not only of his own narrow shaves of detection, but how genuine believers often get into trouble, both at Mecca and Medina, on suspicion of their being disguised Christians.



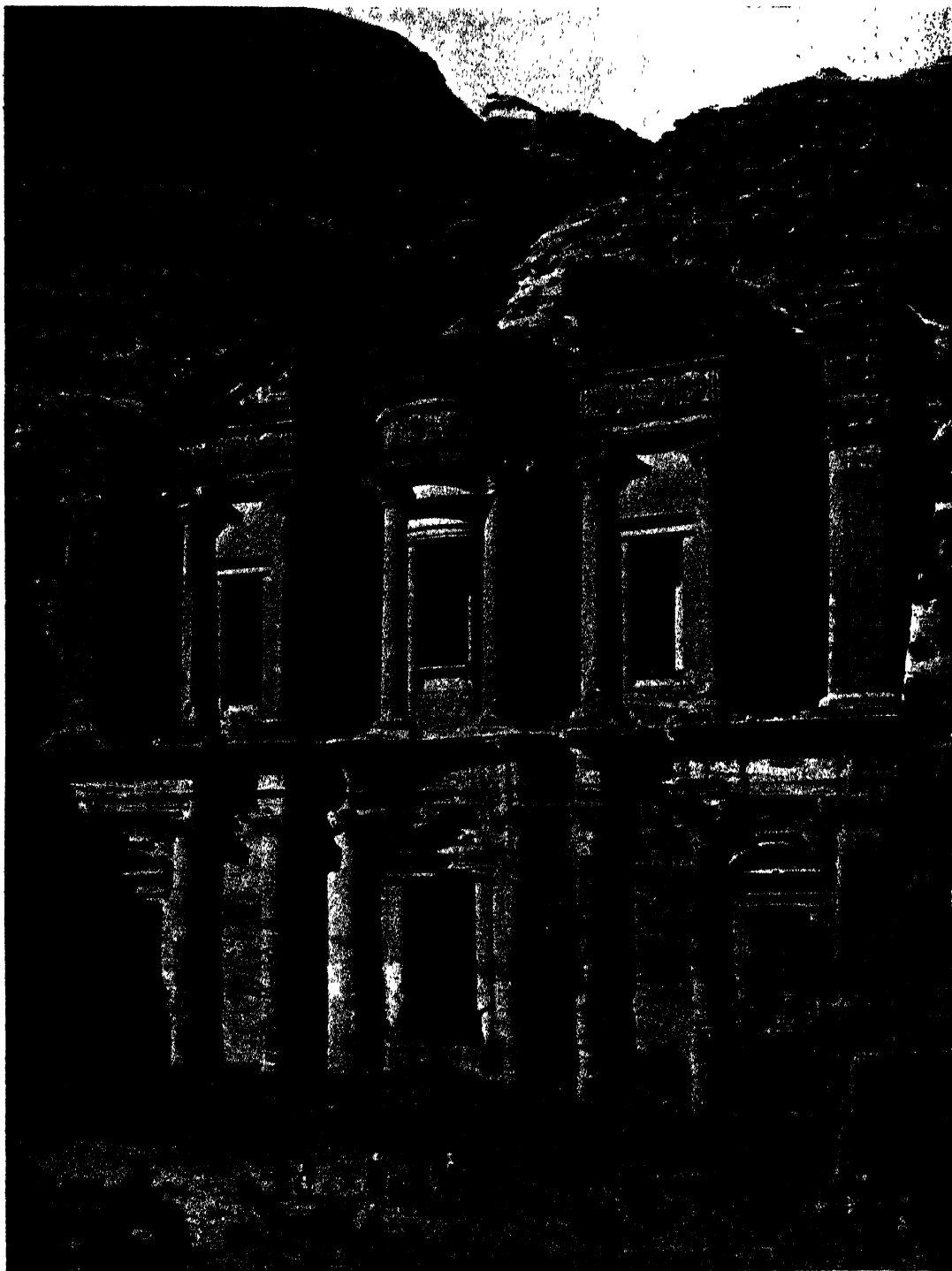
sanctity as the refuge of Mohammed, at whose tomb and coffin here, in a mosque now lit by electric light, the faithful worship with frenzied devotion; but this shrine is not held so sacred as the Kaaba, and pilgrims may with a good conscience shirk the extra journey as a work of supererogation, made particularly dangerous by the fierce Bedouins who infest the hill passes. The chief caravans, indeed, took Medina on the way from Damascus and Cairo; and the railway has brought huge loads of passengers to this city, even when it was being beset by rebellious Arabs, provoked to an outbreak by fear that the new way of travel would cut into their blackmailing business. Yembo is the nearest port on the Hedjaz coast, along which lie other small havens better known to Arab *dhow*s than to European steamers.

The Red Sea, 1450 miles long, with a mean breadth of 180 miles, gets its name probably from the bare, sun-flushed mountains that seem, though leagues behind, almost to border the deep-blue water, or from the coral reefs and islets that make its navigation a matter of care to the great liners for whom it is a highway; or perhaps from its fringes of red sand strewn with a wealth of beautiful shells and coralline fragments. In summer the air of this landlocked sheet is notoriously oppressive, when European passengers are fain to sleep on deck in the lightest of covering; and sometimes a steamer has to be put about, running back against the wind for the sake of ventilating her heated decks. The currents of air are regular, from the south in winter, from the north in summer, so that one knows what to expect; and lucky is the well-engined Argo that gets a head wind in this stifling sea.

The top forks into two branches, the Gulf of Suez narrowing straight on, and the smaller Gulf of Akaba penetrating northwards for some hundred miles up to the little town of the same name at its head. The latter channel is now almost deserted by shipping; but in Solomon's time it was the great road of ocean commerce into Palestine. At one time it appears to have

pierced deeper into the desert, where only a ridge separates this hollow from the cleft opening northwards to the Dead Sea. Here was the land of Edom, in which Mount Hor looks down upon the wonderfully tinted rocks of the "Valley of Moses", and the not less wonderful ruins of Petra, "rose-red city half as old as time", once capital of Arabia Petræa, its tombs and temples carved out of precipitous sandstone cliffs in an arid gorge now uninhabitable, and long seldom visited through the fear of its Bedouin guardians. The savage desolation of its scenery made a deep impression on Layard, as on other travellers. "The rocks of friable limestone, worn by the weather into forms of endless variety, some of which could scarcely be distinguished from the remains of ancient buildings; the solitary columns rising here and there among the shapeless heaps of masonry; the gigantic flights of steps, cut in the rock, leading to the tombs; the absence of all vegetation to relieve the solemn monotony of the bare brown soil; the mountains rising abruptly on all sides; the silence and solitude, scarcely disturbed by the wild Arab lurking among the fragments of pediments, fallen cornices, and architraves which encumber the narrow valley, render the ruins of Petra unlike those of any other ancient city in the world."

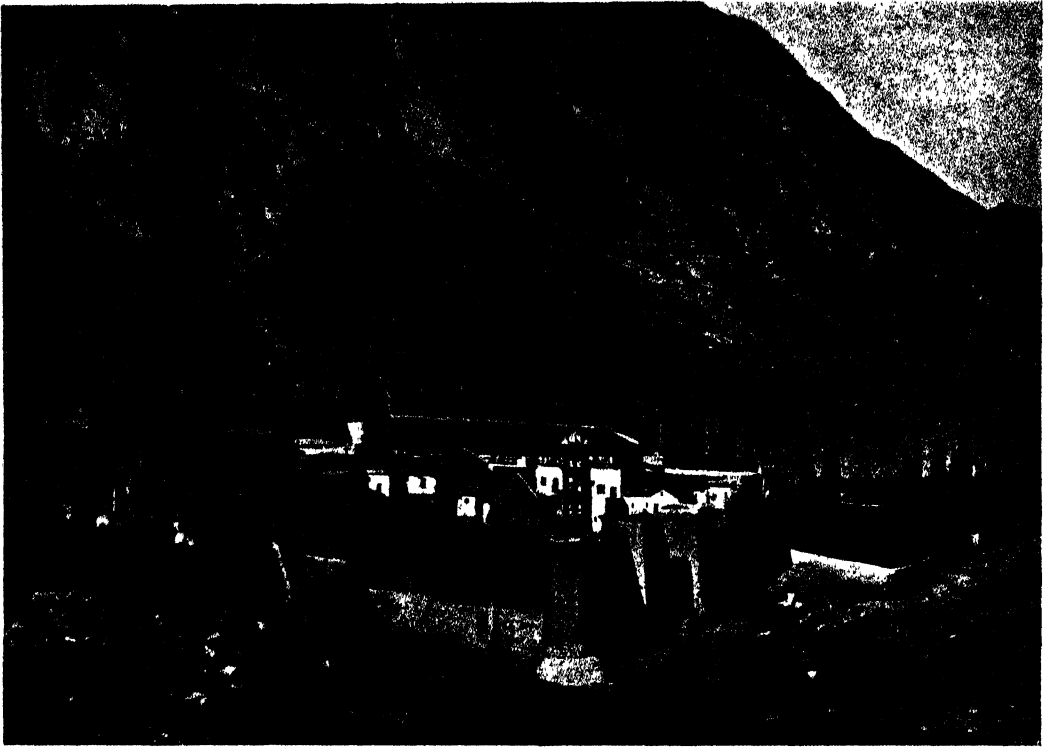
The peninsula between the two arms of the Dead Sea is notable as the Desert of the Exodus, more desolate than ever since its scanty timber has been destroyed through the short-sighted policy of imposing a tribute in charcoal upon the few thousand poor Bedouins that make its inhabitants. The central part is the limestone plateau of Jebel Tih, scarped by abrupt precipices, seamed by crooked fissures, and islanded with mountains of sandstone or igneous rock, whose crumbling fills the dry valleys with rivers of brightly-tinted sand, exceptional patches in this rugged wilderness. On the north it slopes down to the sandy shore of the Mediterranean. The southern tongue is occupied by a labyrinth of granitic mountains and gorges, among which Arabia shows most impressively



Donald M'Leish

The Wonderful Ruined City of Petra: the temple of Ed Deir, carved entirely out of the living rock

## The World of To-day



Sinai: the monastery of St. Catherine at the foot of the holy mountain

her frequent aspect as a fleshless skeleton.<sup>1</sup>

The name Sinai is unknown to its modern inhabitants; and in our time there has been much controversy as to the identification of the Biblical Mount Sinai. The traditional site, venerated by Moslem as well as Christian, is Jebel Musa, the Mount of Moses, in the southern corner, below which Justinian built a convent fortress, still garrisoned by Greek monks, who now and

again have had a trying task in the defence of this outpost of the Cross, and are fain to gain the good-will of their Bedouin neighbours through alms of food let down from the massive walls by ropes and taken as tribute. In the monastery, with relics of its patron St. Catherine, are treasured priceless Byzantine manuscripts; and a crypt is entered reverently with unshod feet as the spot on which Jehovah appeared in

<sup>1</sup> "The country of the peninsula has an extraordinary burnt-up look, as if it had only just been turned out of Dame Nature's crucible. The facts of there being little or no vegetation on the hills, and the atmosphere denudation being slight compared to the denuding power of the torrents, combined with the extraordinary medley of mountains and isolate hills that form the greater part of the country, result in an exposition of the geographical formation of the country in a manner that is rarely visible elsewhere. Dykes of trap-rock lie across the trough of the *wadys*, conspicuous in their dark homogeneous character. Whichever way we turn, the native rock is visible to the eye, with the trend and contortions of the strata plainly exposed to view; and from an

eminence we may mark the recurrence of the beds as plainly as we could if the country had been modelled, and the model was the object of our study. On the sides of the *wadys*, masses of clay left in the sheltered portions, high up many feet above the bed of the valley, attract the eye by their colour, contrasting with the backing of sandstone, granite, or other crystalline rock which form the mountains of the peninsula. Lodes and veins of copper are frequently visible as one continues one's way; and everything lies so naked before one, that it would be difficult, if countries could be made to order, to construct one better adapted for the illustration of geology."—Captain Haynes' *Man-hunting in the Desert*.

the burning bush; as in the vicinity are shown the Rock of Moses and the scene of the Brazen Serpent. Higher up stands a shrine of Mohammed, who, according to legend, gained at this convent the shreds of Christianity which he wove into his own creed. The frowning peaks around, when wrapped in the blackness of tempest, make a scene of impressive awe that well fits the revelation believed to have been here thundered forth. But critics who spare no tradition have shown reasons against this being taken for the Mountain of the Law, some finding it rather in higher points of the same range, while others place it to the north in the heights of the Tih, or among the not less stern features of Edom.

The central highway of Sinai is the pilgrim route from Suez, by the fort of Nackl, to Akaba. Its chief port is Tor, lying to the south of Jebel Musa on the Gulf of Suez. Here arises another much-vexed question, as to the crossing-place of the Israelites. Arab tradition places this some way down the Gulf, where in the howling of the wind are still heard the despairing cries of Pharaoh's host, turning wildly back to that land of Goshen, itself now overwhelmed by waves of sand. More critical theorists seek it rather in the shallow upper waters, once extending higher up into the desert along the line of the great canal that continues the Gulf as boundary between Africa and Asia.

Here, but for this strip of water, the two continents merge by their

common deserts. In one sense the Sinaitic peninsula has already brought us into Africa, as this corner of Arabia is Egyptian territory, having been superficially subdued by the ambitious viceroys who, a century ago, asserted their independence of Constantinople. The Suez Canal appears to be modifying the climate of the isthmus, drawing along it from the Mediterranean clouds and fogs to moisten the arid banks that gleam like snow under the electric light of



Underwood & Underwood

Stairway up the Steep Side of Mount Sinai, used for Centuries by Pilgrims

steamers. All over Asia we see how rain is the enchanter's wand by which a desert may be turned into a garden.

The Great War has stirred Arabia to shake off that uncongenial and incomplete Turkish domination; and this stubborn people, whom the Romans failed to conquer, manifests an impulse to erect itself into a united nation. That will be no easy undertaking, in view of the undisciplined fierceness and feuds of its predatory clans, and the jealousies of the rulers who in different quarters have been able to exercise more or less stable authority. During the War, the Wahabi Emirs played a part in the background, he of Nejd siding with the Allies, while his neighbour of Hail backed the Turks.

The most conspicuous share in freeing his country from the Turk was taken by Hussein, the new-made king of the Hedjaz, and his sons, who thereby gained such ascendancy that two of them were proclaimed princes respectively of Syria and of Mesopotamia, thus in a manner to join the northern Arabs under one influence. That arrangement did not commend itself to the Allies; but now the ablest of these princes, Feisul, has under British protectorate been crowned at Baghdad after France had taken his proposed throne in Damascus. The most dangerous native rival of the new dynasty appears to be that Wahabi Emir, for the present kept quiet by a pension from our coffers.

King Hussein himself has had to be subsidized from the same source, as indemnity for loss of revenue through the interruptions of pilgrimage in the War.

His followers did good service in conjunction with Allied troops, led by the Emir Feisul and by a British hero whose adventures in this confused struggle make a veritable romance. Colonel T. E. Lawrence, whose modesty has too much prevented him from publishing his exploits, was no soldier by choice, but an Oxford

archæologist engaged in such researches as have been so fruitful for our knowledge of the Nearer East. In this employment, and in venturesome wandering, he gained a singular acquaintance with the Arab nature and a marvellous mastery over the wild warriors whom he led to battle, if not as friends of the Frankish powers, at least as foes of the Turk. After no more than a few days' military training, and with no love for bloodshed, he gathered an army of myriads of desert warriors with which he took Mecca from the Turks, and so harassed them along the broken line of their rail to Medina that they are said to have offered a reward of £100,000 for his head.

The core of his nebulous host was the bloodthirsty tribe of the Huweitats, terror of their neighbours about the Akaba Gulf, themselves split into two septs, who, when not engaged in alien slaughter, were in the way of fighting with each other to keep their hands in. Of Auda, the chief of this Bedouin clan, a local Rob Roy or Fra Diavolo, it is stated that with more than two dozen wives from first to last, in his old age he had only one young son left alive, so deadly was the wear and tear of their bellicose life; yet such a man laid aside for the nonce his chronic feuds and stooped his truculent pride to follow the Christian scholar that so effectively had exchanged the gown for the sword. And when we consider what are likely to be the most virile members of the new Arab state, it may well be asked if the chief able to impose upon it concord and order must not prove himself one in a thousand. The forming of a cabinet and the drawing up of a constitution will be for such a potentate what Saul's armour was to David. And the Allied powers that welcomed its aid, have seen cause to distrust the spirit of national union they have evoked, when they find it looking askance upon their patronizing proposals of mandated protectorate, a notion ill-translatable into any dialect of Arabic.

# PERSIA

## IRAN AND ITS PEOPLE

"How are the mighty fallen!" is the first thought that rises in considering the present state of Persia, known rather to its own people by the ancient name Iran. It rose suddenly to be the greatest world-power under Cyrus, as to whose youth Xenophon and Herodotus give us contradictory romances; but we know for certain that he conquered Cræsus, the rich king of Lydia, as also his neighbours the Medes and the Babylonians. Cambyzes, Darius, Xerxes, are other names at which once "the world grew pale", when Egypt and Asia Minor had fallen under their empire, spreading, as Cyrus the younger could boast, from palm to pine, and by mastery of the Levant, it grew into a great naval as well as military power that came near to overwhelming the nascent civilization of Greece. Many a moral has been pointed, many a tale adorned from the imposing throne filled in turn by Seleucidæ and Sassanidæ, by Seljuks and Sufis. Sapor the Great, Chosroes, Caliph Omar, Alp Arslan glimmer through our misty knowledge of the Dark Ages. In mediæval times this was the arena of resounding but futile conquests by Genghiz Khan and Tamerlane. Not even Macaulay's schoolboy could go over all the usurpers and dynasties that have here played their part in Asian history; but the general reader vaguely remembers how, in our own Georgian days, the Persian sceptre had a gleam of its old glory under Nadir Shah, last of the Asiatic Napoleons. Perhaps Europe's clearest glimpse into its modern history was the object-lesson of visits from that late Shah, with his diamonds and gold

spectacles, a gaping-stock for crowds, hardly aware how his title "king of kings" had once been no empty boast. Now this famous land, tyrant-ridden and poverty-stricken, has dwindled into a helpless dominion, upheld less by its own strength than by the watchful jealousies of great powers taking it for a battle-ground of commerce.

The boundaries of the Persian Empire have shrunk and swollen with the vicissitudes of its history. Originally the people that gave it a name occupied but the southern part of modern Persia, bordering the Persian Gulf. Geographically it consists of the great Iranian plateau, extending northwards from this gulf to the Caspian Sea, between the basins of the Indus and the Tigris, east and west. From this area Afghanistan and most of Beloochistan have been cut off, leaving the rest of the plateau as the political extent of modern Persia, in shape a very rough curvilinear triangle of about 1000 miles along its base and 700 miles at its sides, enclosing some 630,000 square miles, divided into over 30 provinces, with possibly between 9 and 10 millions of inhabitants, though, as in most Eastern countries, this is a very doubtful estimate. The frequent sight of half-ruined cities, deserted villages, and abandoned fields suggests that the population has decreased, as the natural result of wars in the past, of misgovernment up to the present time, and of ruinous famines such as occurred more than once in the last century.

This table-land, with a general elevation of several thousand feet above the sea, is laced by mountain ranges that diversify a

## The World of To-day

great part of the surface. In the north, the boundary wall of Khorassan and the lofty Elburz chain, running below the south side of the Caspian Sea, continue the line of the Hindu Kush. Along the base of the triangle stretch rows of giant ridges in an oblique direction from north-west to south-east, rising here and there into peaks whose exact height is still uncertain, but some of them surpass any European mountain. In the south-east corner another group of mountains run over into Beloochistan, and straggle inland along its frontier to meet ridges curving round from Khorassan in the north. Thus Persia is enclosed by a broad rim of heights, whose watered valleys are the richest spots of the country. On the great plains within, usually a miniature of the same conformation, cultivation struggles in strips wherever water comes or can be brought by canals and the subterranean conduits called *karez* or *kanats*, whose open shafts are often seen dotting the landscape like huge ant-hills, and their mouths tunnelling the hill-sides. Much of the surface, however, is desert in different degrees of barrenness. Sometimes the arid soil will be more or less poorly clad by such plants as rhubarb, wormwood, asafetida, wild rue, and prickly bushes, but in glens of the stony ridges are hidden away villages, whose herds, when the mountain valley grass fails, can find some pasture on the plain. Elsewhere even the driest vegetation becomes almost lost in wastes of sand that always tend to encroach on what man has won from the wilderness. Large stretches are blighted by salt as so to form the saline marshes and deserts known here as *kavirs* or *kafehs*, which cover much of the surface of Persia. Farther east, in Afghanistan, and in the plains of the Punjab, the ground is often seen whitened by saline efflorescence; but Persia has extensive depressions caked by salt to a thickness of several feet, into which trickle briny streams, gathering in ice-like pools upon what seems a sheet of snow deposited by the evaporating water. In some parts the supply of water is still enough to fill these hollows with shallow lakes, the largest of them Lake

Urumia (or Urumieh) in the north-west corner. Sometimes the desert takes the form of black mud, blistered into treacherous bubbles and pitted with holes or pools of green slime. Again the waste is simply a stony plain, as naked as the slopes that overshadow it; or an expanse of loose friable soil that bears nothing but mud or dust according to the season.

Persia's elevated plains and lofty mountains suffer extremes of temperature, with dryness as the main condition. Most of the rainfall pours off the outer mountain slopes; and the interior has only a few inches annual supply. This and the snow reservoirs of the loftier ranges are drained down in short streams that for the most part lose themselves in that thirsty interior, often dribbled away in irrigation before their water grows so salt as to be a curse rather than a blessing to the land. Of those flowing into the Arabian Gulf only the Karun, an affluent of the Euphrates Delta, is navigable. In the north the most considerable stream is the Safid-Rud (White River), falling into the Caspian Sea, whither also flow the Aras and the Atrek, bordering Persia towards the Russian Transcaucasian and Transcaspiian provinces respectively. The flowery valleys and shady groves, sung so loudly by Persian poets, appear the more lovely in contrast with the general sterility, where all culture depends on happy accident of situation or careful management of the streams and wells, whose possession and distribution has in all times been a fruitful source of quarrel in the East.

So rich, indeed, are some spots that they yield a manifold return for no watering but from dew and occasional storms; but the oases here are usually mountain valleys and river plains, where almost every mud-built village has a setting of walled vineyards and gardens. Forests are rare and stunted, except on the moister slopes of the northern mountains, thickly wooded by valuable timber—oak, beech, elm, walnuts, cedars, and box trees—while the southern sides of these mountains will be found dotted only by a few junipers. The principal crops are much the same as in other Asian countries.

where we have found similar conditions of soil and climate: corn on the higher ground, rice, cotton, tobacco, sugar-cane, and so forth on the lowlands. Barley appears to be the commonest grain. On the southern coast the date-palm grows; the orange comes to perfection in some parts, as does the olive; and all over Persia there are spots bearing grapes, figs, apricots, mulberries, pomegranates, almonds, pistachio-nuts, and almost every kind of European fruit, with some rare or unknown among us. Wine, raisins, and oil are notable products, and the syrups made from various fruits. Melons and cucumbers are much cultivated. When even the desert jungles blossom in their season with bulbous flowers and wild roses, the gardens of the cities have a right to figure so brightly in Persian poetry. Sir John Malcolm tells us how English envoys were entertained to breakfast upon a mound of rose leaves as big as an English haystack, not heaped up altogether in idle compliment, for they were destined to be distilled into the essences for which certain districts have such a renown as blinds us to the general characteristics of a country whose life is far from being all rose-water.

Half of it is barren desert, and the greater part of the rest more fit for pasturage than agriculture, with flocks of goats, sheep, and camels as the chief wealth of its inhabitants. The cow is not so much at home here, though there is one good breed of black cattle in the north. Buffaloes as well as oxen are used for labour, but the former require a damp soil for their wallowing. Horses are carefully bred, sturdy asses and mules also being much used. In the mountain districts especially, the herds have such formidable enemies as the maneless lion, the leopard, the wolf, and the bear, living among jackals, hyenas, gazelles, ibexes, wild goats and asses. The birds include, among many of less amiable character, pheasants and the bulbul or eastern nightingale, as well as, in the north, our own songster of that name and fame. Falconry is a favourite sport with the Persians, who run down hares, antelopes, and other fleet game with hawks and greyhounds trained

to work together. Like the Chinese, they are fond of keeping singing-birds in cages. In some parts are seen circular towers as high as a church, pierced with holes for the lodging of thousands of pigeons. The stork is a frequent figure in this part of the world, bearing something of that sacred character that has accompanied him in Teutonic sympathies. Among friends of man, the Persian animal most familiar to us is the well-known cat whose lordly fur and haughty manners have been so much communicated to our humbler Western puss; but in his own country this feline aristocrat seems to be as exceptional as in England. To match him, an unusually large rat with a bushy tail is found burrowing the ground so as often to make it treacherous for horses. The plains are sometimes pitted with the holes of yellow marmots, or alive with crawling companies of tortoises. Among reptiles are brown snakes that have the trick of climbing a bush and remaining motionless for hours in deceptive mimicry of a dead branch. There is the usual Eastern profusion of poisonous pests, including a particularly huge and hideous hairy spider of the desert, in one district a venomous bug which attacks strangers by preference, in another a scorpion that is said to keep its ill-will for natives; and the dry sandy soil harbours a horny-legged tarantula that has a trick of dropping on one from ceilings. The country is often plagued by locust swarms, the noise of whose multitudinous jaws may be heard as they strip a blooming garden bare in a single night; but in return for their greedy devastations people can shake sackfuls off the trees, to be boiled and eaten after being fattened at their expense. The rivers are as a rule ill-stocked with fish, except those falling into the Caspian, some of which abound in salmon and trout.

The sheep are chiefly of the fat-tailed variety, the fleece of black lambs furnishing the national head-dress. The goats, kept in enormous herds, are commonly black, with long coarse hair, among the tangled masses of which grows a soft down rivalling that celebrated in Kashmere for the manufacture of a choice fabric. Camels'-hair,





Persian Woman Spinning

closely woven with cotton, supplies another cloth for which Persia is noted. But its most famous textile productions are the soft smooth carpets and shawls of elaborate pattern and tasteful blending of colours which have made them a model to Europe, while we have vitiated Persian stuffs by the introduction of aniline dyes to replace the native vegetable pigments that grew only more beautiful with age. Soft felts, sometimes an inch thick, are also used as floor-covering. Silk is largely produced and cunningly woven, and the Persian ladies, having much time on their hands, are often mistresses of rich embroidery, though this art, too, is said to have deteriorated. In the country, peasant-women may be seen spinning with a small hand-wheel, or on a spindle as they walk along.

The most valuable mineral of Persia seems to be the salt with which its plains are only too much encrusted; and mines of rock-salt are worked in the hills. Its fame for precious stones is mainly a borrowed, not to say stolen one, as the shah's Aladdin-like treasure of diamonds and other gems, said to be worth millions, represent his forerunners' raids into richer lands, in particular Nadir Shah's sack of Delhi, when the renowned Koh-i-noor, that now adorns the British crown, fell to the share of his Afghan auxiliaries; and his whole booty was worth some scores of million pounds. Among Persia's own riches in this way the most notable are the turquoise mines in the north-east, this gem being almost peculiar to the country, the name, of course, taken from Turkey, through which turquoises first came into Europe. Pearls are found, as we know from the poets, in the Persian Gulf. Coal, iron, tin, lead, copper, and other minerals are not wanting, as is rather the enterprise to work them productively. Petroleum, bitumen, and sulphur are available in volcanic spots. In the precious metals Persia is poor; but her artisans are skilful in working gold and silver, and in inlaying them upon finely-tempered steel. Among their arts was a beautifully iridescent pottery, but this also has decayed in point of colouring, and the ware never was so firm and delicate as that of China which set them patterns. In brass-work, enamelling on copper, wood-carving, and painting on papier-maché articles, they still show the taste which once made them an artistic nation. More prosaic productions are hides, tobacco, opium, and indigo. The cultivation of sugar-cane has declined; and while the Persians are a very sweet-toothed people, they seem content to import sugar rather than make it for themselves out of the beet-root that thrives particularly in the north.

The chief imports of the country are tea, coffee, cotton goods, fire-arms, motor-cars and various European luxuries for which the late shahs set the fashion of demand. This trade has been keenly contested by England and Russia, the former naturally having a predominance on the southern

sea-coast, and the latter on the Caspian border. Of late, German activity in Asia Minor showed signs of extension into Persia, where some Belgian capital is also employed. But the main factor in commercial development here was the rivalry between the two great European powers in Asia; and for long Russia seemed more able to bring the pressure of her power to bear on this backward neighbour. The French, who a century ago were well in the field for interference with Persian affairs, appear now to have dropped out of it, but a relic of their influence is the extent to which French may still be spoken among the higher class.

Internal communications are not well developed, most of the roads being mere caravan tracks, though in some places improved under foreign influences. A few miles of rail have been made at Teheran, but there such enterprise stopped, Russia seeing well to discourage the spread of railways till she could link them with her own ambitious undertakings of the kind. Telegraph communications, on the other hand, have been much extended since the great Indo-European line was constructed through Persia, whose capital is now connected by wire with the chief provincial cities, an accommodation that, as in China, strengthens the hands of the central government. General F. E. Gordon states that the quiet accession of a recent Shah was materially due to the rapid manner in which it could be proclaimed over the country, cutting short the uncertainty that went to breed civil war. The telegraph has been also used with effect in appealing to the Shah's protection against the oppression of his governors. Often for leagues along a sandy road there will be nothing to cast thicker shade than that of a telegraph-post, and no building in sight but the walled and towered caravanserai built by public spirited or pious princes for the repose of travellers, who, if Europeans, may sometimes find more pleasant lodging at the telegraph-stations. The caravanserai of the East, like our old English *Cold-harbours*, gives little more than stabling for beast and lodging for man in chambers furnished with nothing

but vermin. On the chief roads from the capital a rather better-provided class of rest-house has been here and there established. There is a posting service, at the charge of a kran for each horse per parasang, a somewhat vaguely-measured distance on an average a little under 4 miles. The *kran*, unit of currency, is equal to a few pence, with fractional copper and nickel coins; but accounts are popularly reckoned in *dinars*, a nominal figure whose name, familiar to us from the *Arabian Nights*, will not sound so imposingly when we learn that fifty of these go to a farthing. Ten krans make a *toman*, worth over twice its silver value (3s. 4d.) in the now obsolete form of the gold toman.

Under Nasr-ed-Din there was an army of some 100,000, most of its ranks a mere half-trained and ragged militia, not all kept under arms, and more ready to play the robber or the beggar than the warrior. Their uniform, when they have any, ought to be blue tunics faced with red, red trousers, and sheep-skin bushy, bearing in brass the Lion and the Sun, which make the Persian crest. The most serviceable force was that late Shah's body-guard, raised from the martial nomadic tribes, whose divisions he amused himself by dressing up in imitation of European Cossacks, Uhlands, Cuirassiers, and so forth. He also set up a fleet of two or three gun-boats or yachts, more or less unserviceable. Experienced officers have declared that the Persians, properly trained and led, would make excellent soldiers, as their neighbours have learned in old times. But the whole machine of government is out of gear, except for oppression; its rusty wheels having always to be oiled by the bribery and the dishonest perquisites which, under various names—*backshish*, "squeeze", *dustoor*, and, in Persia, *mudakhel*—are the corruption of Oriental business. The regular revenue, supplemented by fines, forced levies, and other exactions, is from a varying proportion of the produce of the land, paid in cash or kind, much of it sticking to the hands of the local authorities after a process of collection which becomes a game between the greed of officials and the cunning or

obstinacy of the tax-payer. The customs dues, for some time past, have been hypothecated to meet the claims of foreign creditors.

This land's inhabitants are mainly of the Iranian race, a branch of our own Caucasian stock, fair in complexion for Orientals, with handsome features, long straight hair, and bushy black beards. These features are, however, blended, especially in the north and on the eastern borders, with the Turanian blood of Tartar and Turki tribes, to one of which belonged the present ruling family. The nomadic pastoral bands of this stock are commonly known as Iliats. On the west are numerous Kurds and kindred mountaineer tribes, with Arabs to the south and Armenians to the north of this side. All over the country wandering gypsies, under the name of Luris, pick up a living as tinkers, leather-dressers, pedlars, and thieves. Another element of the population is the black slaves who have long been a point of respectability in Persian households, where they appear to be not unkindly treated as a rule, and often emancipated as reward for faithful service.

In days of old Iran was a breeding ground of religious thought that took a more practical turn than in India. Its dominant idea was that of a conflict between good and evil, typified as Ormuzd and Ahriman, the latter akin to the Satan of our scriptures. Perhaps contemporary with Moses, or at least with the Wise Men of Greece, Zoroaster is believed to have shaped on these lines a national religion, with a reverence for fire as its most notable rite, still lingering among the exiled Parsees of India as in some parts of Persia. Here also germinated the sun-worship of Mithraism, that spread itself in Roman camps as far as our own island, and more than is generally known, has coloured Catholic rites and festivals. But the native creeds went down before Islam's onslaught; and now the mass of this people are Mohammedans, with a difference that causes the devout of Turkey or Tartary to spit at the name of these Persian heretics.

Their country is the stronghold of the Shiah schism, which recognized Ali, son-in-



Persian *Seyid*, with Water Pipe (*Kalian*)

A *Seyid*, or descendant of the Prophet, wears a green or dark-blue turban.

law of the Prophet, as his successor, and rejected the Sunna, a body of tradition accepted along with the Koran by the orthodox Sunnites or adherents of Omar, who make the majority in the Moslem world. The Shiahs rival their revilers in devout bigotry to the letter and forms of the faith as in feeble regard for its moral spirit. Their mollahs and dervishes do not fall short of other bigots in showing themselves fanatical opponents of progress, while, indeed, some of the loudest professors are at heart unprincipled humbugs whose main care for religion is as a matter of profit. To be a *Seyid*, or descendant of the Prophet, distinguished by a green or dark-blue turban, is here almost an order of nobility; and *Hadji*, one who has performed the pil-

grimage to Mecca, is a title of respect. This quick-witted and talkative people love to discuss matters of theology, and are duly punctilious as to the observances of their creed. But one of its characteristic precepts must be much neglected, to judge by the amount of wine produced and consumed, more or less *sub rosa*, in the country of Omar Khayyam, where a coarse arrack spirit is much used as well as that forbidden juice of the grape. Yet such is human nature that when the Shah granted to foreign enterprise a tobacco monopoly—innovation hateful as once the excise in England—the priesthood had power to declare a general boycott of this indispensable and permitted indulgence, and pipes were put out all over the capital by the combined force of popular and religious resentment, till the obnoxious measure was withdrawn.

It is the antipathies of faith that are strongest in Persia, where zealous hatred boils up in hot fits of fanaticism, but the normal temperature seems rather lukewarm till stirred by hatred of the infidel. The Shiah is more averse than the Sunnite to letting an unbeliever so much as peep into their shrines. In most towns a European woman durst not show her face in the streets, especially when the populace is excited by religious fasts. A true believer affects to shrink from contact with one of another creed, and will smash the cup from which such a one has drunk. Popular superstition has for its ministers the fierce dervishes, answering to Hindoo fakirs, who wander about, often naked but for a leopard skin, armed with a huge club, demanding charity as a right, and imposing on all classes by a variety of qualities that range from lunacy to downright scoundrelism. In the Mohurram, or month of religious mourning, a very popular spectacle is a passion play representing the deaths of Hussein and Hassan, the sons of Ali, whose martyrdom is enacted in a realistic style that rouses the audience to frenzies of emotion, in which men rush about half-naked, beating and cutting themselves like the prophets of Baal. The great fast of the Ramazan, when for a month food, drink, or smoke must not

pass the true believer's mouth from sunrise to sunset, is strictly kept, at least in public. The chief feast is the Moslem New Year that falls in spring, as in our Old Calendar.

This prevailing orthodoxy is not universal. Some Persian subjects, chiefly the Kurds, are Sunnites. The Sufis, whose mystical free-thinking pantheism seems to blend readily with the Shiah creed, are heretics of old date and wide diffusion; and indeed the speculative turn of Persian faith has been a hotbed for sects. A most vigorous offshoot of Islam is the remarkable Babi body of reformed Mohammedans grown up in the last half-century, under hot persecution, which is believed now to count some millions of adherents in all classes. There are men still living who have seen the birth of a new religion which may yet spread over the East, as did Buddhism and Mohammedanism itself. In 1844 a young man named Mirza Ali Mohammed announced himself as the *Bab* or gate by which his fellow-believers might enter upon a spiritual life, revealed to him through pious meditation and study. The history of this modern prophet is as yet little known in Europe: it has been sympathetically dealt with by Professor E. G. Browne, who made acquaintance with many of his followers. Other accounts agree in giving the movement the notes of a true religious reformation, alloyed with the mystic fancies of Oriental philosophy. Professing to be a return to the pure primitive Mohammedanism, the Bab's doctrine preached tolerance, denounced polygamy, raised the status of woman, forbade the use of tobacco, treated circumcision and other outward observances as matters of indifference, in short seems largely inspired by a Christian spirit, while its founder claimed to be, in some sort, a manifestation of divine truth, and appointed eighteen apostles to teach his gospel, nineteen being a sacred number in this revelation. His earnestness and eloquence had soon drawn about him disciples who became known as Babis; then their zeal excited the bigoted rage of the orthodox as also the suspicion of the Government. At the outset, indeed, some

fanatics of the sect had to do with an attempt on the Shah's life, and in the north a band of Babis held out in arms against his troops. The leader had been thrown into prison, where he occupied himself in writing books for the guidance and consolation of his followers, till in 1850 he was executed in a manner that came near to creating the fame of a miracle. Hung or tied up along with one of his disciples to be shot, when the smoke of the volley cleared away, while the other victim's body dangled lifeless, the Bab had disappeared. The bullets had cut the ropes by which he was fastened, and unseen he had taken refuge in a chamber close by, whence, being presently discovered, he was dragged forth again to death. These corpses, cast out of the city to be eaten by dogs, were rescued by friends who reverently swathed them in silk and sent them to Teheran. There buried in a little shrine, some years later the venerated remains were removed to an unknown resting-place. By another extraordinary coincidence, with an obvious parallel, it is stated that a second disciple had for the moment escaped death by denying his master, but, afterwards repenting, welcomed the martyrdom from which human weakness had shrunk.

Here, again, the blood of martyrs proved to be the seed of the Church. The Babi beliefs spread in spite of bitter persecution, till the community formed a great secret society, whose relations with the orthodox believers were much like those of the early Christians with the synagogue. The Babis attended the mosques to practise the public duties of religion, while cultivating spiritual fellowship with the initiated in private conventicles, and cherishing the precepts of their founder. Of their sincerity, at least, there can be no doubt, since for nearly half a century they lived in danger of denunciation to the "rulers and Pharisees", of executions with cruel tortures, or of massacre by spasms of mob violence; and under these trials they appear to have shown a patience and fortitude which won them sympathy even of many who did not accept their faith. Up to 1891 they continued to suffer from outbreaks in several towns; then

the official persecution relaxed, the Shah being satisfied that they had no design to "turn the world upside down".

Meanwhile their faith had gone through another crisis. The mantle of the martyred prophet was by some believed to fall on a young man, Mirza Yahya, known as Ezel, who with other leaders took refuge at Baghdad. The Turkish Government, at the request of Persia, removed these exiles to European Turkey, where a schism took shape among them. Beha, the new prophet's half-brother, revealed himself as a stronger spirit and went on to declare that the Bab had been only forerunner of a higher manifestation in his own person. The church thus became split into Behaists and Ezelists, whose dissensions, exasperated to the point of bloodshed, prompted the Turkish Government to separate them, Beha being fixed at Acre and Ezel in Cyprus. While the faction of the latter dwindled, the former made good his claims to the allegiance of the whole, so that Professor E. G. Browne found the teachings of Beha more revered than those of the Bab himself, forty years after his martyrdom. Beha died in 1892, leaving a body of mystical doctrine, in which he is presented as the culminating light of a progressive series of revelations; and though his adherents, and those of his rival Ezel, seem to have fed more on the speculative than on the practical part of their teaching, his own saintly character marked a very much higher point of religious aspiration than the pretensions of that sanguinary Mahdi who at the same time flourished on the Nile. One saying of Beha is: "Let not a man glory in loving his country, but rather in loving his kind". His son, Abbas Effendi, living in venerated exile at Acre, was then looked on as the "Master" of this promising church, whose teaching has leavened Persia, and spread as far as America, where, as in Britain, the since deceased patriarch a few years ago came to be received with sympathetic respect.

Christians are tolerated in Persia, a proportion of the Shah's subjects belonging to the Armenian Church, with an archbishop seated at Ispahan, and France for a pro-

pector. The north-west corner is an asylum also for Nestorians and other peculiar churchmen. The cities hold communities of despised Jews, who may also be found travelling about in the character of acrobats and minstrels, and are employed in dirty jobs befitting such pariahs. There is still a remnant of an old national faith in the Guebres or Fire Worshipers, chiefly about Yezd and Kerman in the east, where they number a few thousand, marked off by a distinctive yellow dress and by features that seem best to represent the pure Persian blood, since they do not intermarry with other stocks. Looked on askance and often harshly dealt with at home, they are objects of kindly interest to their prosperous kinsmen in faith, the Parsees of Bombay.

The worldly side of Persian nature is represented by an abundant literature, in particular by florid and sententious poetry, best known to us through garbled translations of Omar Khayyam, that epicurean bard of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, who has so strongly commended himself to our *fin de siècle* mood. The other classical poets are to English readers little more than names: Firdousi, the Homer or Virgil of Persia; Hafiz, its Horace or Anacreon, who flourished about Chaucer's time; and Sadi, its melodious moralist, about a century older, while Firdousi died at the beginning of Canute's reign. The writings of these and other poets have been a liberal education for a people with whom an apt quotation weighs more than an argument; and still Persia bears a thick crop of poets whose lucubrations are apt to prove a mosaic of the figures and ideas with which their predecessors have enriched a most florid language. They are also very fond of such apologues and fairy tales as, through Saracenic channels, have found their way from India into European literature; and their histories, as we might expect, are coloured by the same bent to imagination. Persian rhetoric is almost a proverb for its amassing of complimentary metaphors and daring hyperbole, which to the practical Western mind seem such a waste of breath or ink. Almost alone among Moslem nations this

one has cultivated the drama, notably in productions of a religious kind, resembling our Middle Age mystery plays. Its notions of science are mainly borrowed from the Arabian philosophers, but in the famous Nazr-ed-Deen it had one great astronomer when Europe was still in scientific darkness. In divinity its writings are copious, the Babi and other sects still blackening much paper in manuscript, or through the printing-presses at work in the chief cities, where lithography is also used for the multiplication of copies of a caligraphy cultivated here almost as a fine art.

Much attention has been given to the elaborate grammar and lexicography of the language, which began to take its modern shape some thousand years ago, and has since been recruited by many Arab words and phrases. The written character is Arabic, with additional letters and points. In the East, Persian holds much the same rank as French in Europe, having been introduced into India as the court language of its Moslem conquerors. Reading and writing are usual accomplishments among the better class, while even the uneducated, through listening to story-tellers and reciters, become to some extent familiarized with the classics, passages from which pass as current as homely proverbs.

The priests here are also lawyers, while the judges are officials of Government, who, Sir Percy Sykes tells us, have sometimes been the employers or accomplices of robbers. In each province the governor has powers limited only by appeal to the Shah, whose arbitrary dealings with the life and property of his subjects are restrained to some extent by respect for law as interpreted by the mollahs. The machinery of justice has to be so well greased by bribery that in civil cases litigants turn rather to arbitration; yet Dr. Willis remarks that to bribe a Persian court comes cheaper than the fees and costs of an English one. Criminals are at least dealt with expeditiously, in the case of petty crimes, by the *cadi* magistrates of towns, or by the headmen of villages. The rudiment of Persian justice has been the *bastinado*, to which ordinary offenders are so

## The World of To-day

inured that they will choose it rather than a fine. The pettiest judge has his *ferrashes*, armed with long supple wands, who at a sign fling the culprit on his back, hold up his feet, fastened by loops to a pole, and break over them as many sticks as may be ordered, then let the poor wretch crawl away on all-fours as best he can, happy if he can

are sometimes thrown into a well, hurled from a tower, or wrapped in a carpet to be trampled to death. A dignified fate is strangling by a bowstring, or death by a cup of poisoned coffee, such as is believed to be still offered to those who have incurred the Shah's enmity. The nobles, indeed, appear not to have been subject to more



Persia's Quaint Instrument of Justice: an offender trussed up for punishment by bastinado

afford means to poultice his sores with yolk of eggs, the approved remedy. All classes have been liable to this castigation, which falls more sorely on a soft citizen than on the horny soles of the barefooted peasant. Prisoners are kept in fetters or in the stocks. As severer punishments, maiming, blinding, and torturing were practised; and for the common mode of execution by cutting the throat might be substituted more cruel ones, crucifixion against a wall, boiling or baking alive, blowing away from guns. Women

vulgar forms of execution; and it is fair to say that some of these atrocities may be spoken of in the past tense, at all events so far as the royal court is concerned; for Nasr-ed-Din, whatever his other faults, had no taste for cruelty, and though he went attended by red-clothed executioners, cared not to be spectator of their prowess.

The old Israelitish law of "cities of refuge" is still illustrated here, such sacred spots as tombs of saints being held asylums in which the worst criminal is safe till he

can be starved or tricked into surrender. Other curious points of refuge are the Shah's stable, the tail of his horse, and a great gun standing in a square of Teheran, huddled round which may be seen a group of haggard murderers, safe here not only from the hand of the law but from the surer revenge of their victims' kin. The law of retaliation is recognized, especially in the old Persia of the south, and on the wild borders, where men still go armed, with blood for blood as a point of honour, so that the slaying of a neighbour may start a feud for generations, unless the injured relatives can be propitiated by compensation.

In the arts of preserving life the Persians have not made so much progress as in those of inflicting pain or death. At Teheran, and perhaps in other large cities, there are physicians who condescend to borrow knowledge from the West, but the native faculty in general are ignorant quacks who divide diseases and remedies into *hot* and *cold*, and treat complaints so classified by their opposites. Purging and bleeding are in high honour, drastic treatment, at hazard, being the rule. Surgery is rudely practised by barbers, farriers, and bone-setters; leeches, acupuncture, and the actual cautery are approved applications; but amputation is held in suspicion, as too much resembling the operations of the law. Jewesses and old women act as midwives. A flourishing practice among the poor is done by mendicant dervishes, who prescribe a charm or verse of the Koran, written on a piece of paper, to be swallowed as a pill, or the ink washed off into a draught. Magicians, diviners, and the like drive a good business. Even patients of the better class will sometimes not take the dose prescribed for them till they have called in an astrologer to fix an auspicious time for it; and the last moments of the dying are like to be passed in a tumult of noisily condoling friends, where the loudest note is the sing-song ministrations of a mollah who, no more than the doctor, can drive away death. Usually, like other Orientals, the people have a greedy appreciation of Frankish remedies, but a man once declined to take

medicine from Mrs. Bishop "for fear it should make him a Christian".

In connection with medical matters may be mentioned the hot baths, a luxury of the East which now needs no describing in England, though indeed our imitations are, as a rule, more comfortable, certainly more clean, than their originals. The attendants at them have a special skill in shampooing, kneading, and pounding the body, a handling much appreciated by Persians as refreshment after fatigue. Men shave their heads, as becomes good Mohammedans, but at least grow moustaches, which in age come to be a beard. Both sexes are much given to the use of dyes and pigments, such as henna, with which men sometimes stain beards and hands brown, yellow, or even a brilliant red, which distinguishes the tails of the royal horses.

Where their nature is not obscured by fanaticism the Persians appear to be a lively, sociable, humorous, and talkative people, who bear the name of being the most fluent liars in the East. In public, indeed, they affect a grave exterior, and their ceremonious manners strongly contrast with the blunt rudeness of the Afghans. As in other Moslem countries their family life is a jealously-guarded one, but behind its bars a good deal of sensuality and infidelity is suspected. As usual, polygamy is the exception, poverty keeping most men to one wife. It is the houses of the rich that have their *anderun*, or separate court for the women, in the centre of which flower-beds and orange trees may enclose a tank gleaming with great gold-fish; and round the sides open darkened rooms, often sumptuously furnished in a gimcrack style. Here the women gossip, titter, and yawn their lives away, like grown-up children, much of their time being spent in dressing, painting, sucking sweets, and smoking cigarettes. The common building material is half-baked earth, that gives the towns a monotonous drab colouring, relieved by gay striped awnings and wooden balconies, and by the often bright colouring of the mosques. Favourite internal decorations are wall-paintings, coloured tiles, wood carvings,





Persian Woman: indoor costume

stucco ornaments, mirrors, little bits of glass arranged in patterns, and small panes of coloured glass. Glass in the latticed windows is an exceptional luxury, instead of which oiled paper comes into use. The houses are flat-roofed, or with beehive-like tops, and the roof makes a sleeping or lounging place in hot weather, unless the household has some cool underground chamber in which to take refuge from the sun. On the roof, indeed, in full view of neighbours, go on intimate domesticities, airing of beds, whipping of children, the actual and the metaphorical washing of dirty linen, and what personal ablutions seem necessary. Better-class houses are sometimes provided with a shaft or turret for ventilating the interior; and such cowl

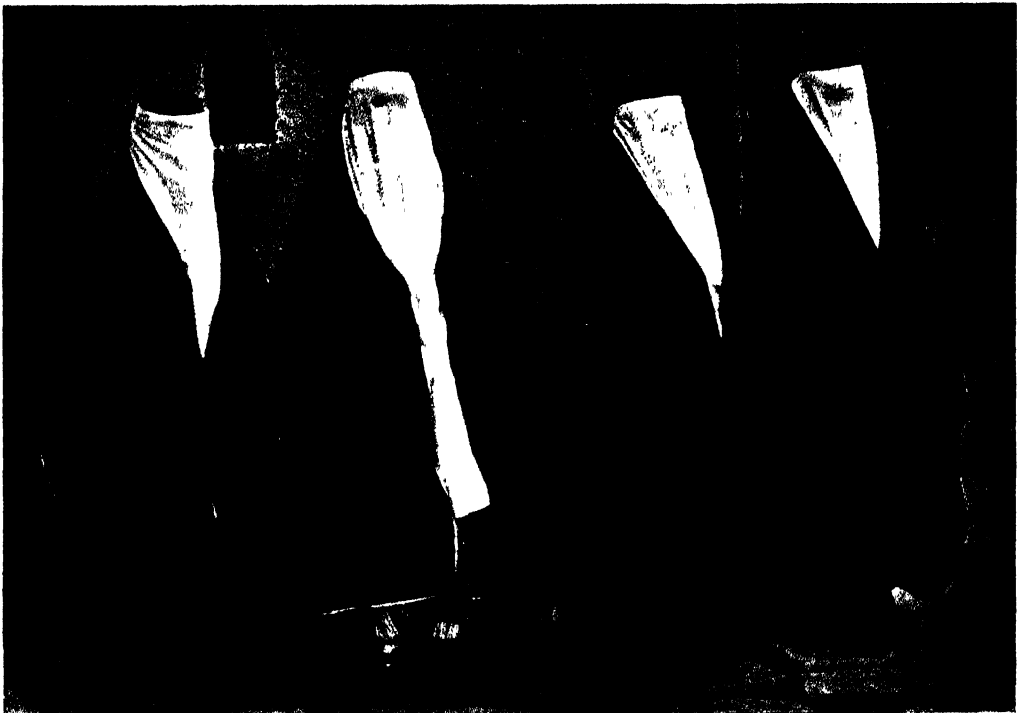
may be seen topping the miserable huts of Mekran. On the sweltering shores of the Persian Gulf shelters are easily made of reeds or mats, cooled by throwing water over them, like the Indian *tatties*. There are no cheerful hearths for cold weather; but in the centre of the room may be a deep fire-hole round which the family huddle under a sort of tent made by blankets or quilts. It must be difficult to build for a climate that in winter freezes men to death on the uplands, while in summer on the plains "the air you breathe seems to be on fire", as an old traveller declares.

Persia is a cheap country to live in, food being more plentiful than money, though now and then it suffers grievously from famines. The staple food of the working-class is flat cakes of unleavened bread that may be used as plates or spoons for such "kitchen" as cheese, curds, fruit, or vegetables. In the south, dates, that most feeding of fruits, makes a large part of their diet. In the towns there are cook-shops for the sale of kabobs, lumps of roasted mince-meat stuck on a skewer; pilaws, stews of flesh and rice; jars of soup; and slices from a sheep baked whole. The rich have their dainty dishes, fowls boiled to rags and smothered in sauce, or a young lamb roasted whole and stuffed with nuts, dates, or raisins. The *menu* of a Persian banquet seems amazingly wasteful, but nothing is thrown away on the hungry attendants who crowd at the heels of each honoured guest. A visit from the Shah or some other great man is looked on as a calamity, like a swarm of locusts. The favourite drink is sherbet, not the fizzy sherbet of our confectioners, but simply water iced and sweetened with various fruit-syrups; the choicest kind is distilled from willow flowers. Weak tea, much sweetened, is in Persia what coffee is in Turkey. Wine and spirits, as already mentioned, are much drunk more or less in secret, costing only a few pence a bottle, and Persians who do neglect the injunctions of their prophet are apt to drink to excess. The use of tobacco, which costs a few pence a pound, is general, smoked in cigarettes,

or more commonly in the *kalian* or long hubble-bubble pipe, which is in constant use, and no great man stirs forth without his pipe-bearer. Opium-eating and smoking is a too common indulgence, especially among old people. Women, and indeed all Persians, are much addicted to sweetmeats, a favourite form being that made from manna, a white substance either deposited by an insect on, or exuded from leaves.

The national dress is wide trousers, tucked up into the waistband for work, and a belted coat with pleated skirt like an elongated Norfolk jacket, which among the higher classes often takes more the form of our frock-coat. The head-gear is a close felt cap or a high black lambskin hat, sometimes with a turban wound round it, and formerly worn much taller in shape, with an indentation at the top that seems the rudiment of our mitre. The women's costume indoors has been described as that of a ballet-girl without the tights, a short skirt over often

bare legs, a smart jacket or blouse, and a cloud of gauze about the head. They never go abroad unless closely veiled and mantled from head to foot, but it is said that the veils grow thinner where foreigners are tempted to take a peep through them. The prevailing colour of outdoor dress is blue. The peasantry are often seen in faded rags, but this may sometimes be from policy rather than need, as in Persia it is not always safe to seem well off. For the same reason, perhaps, travellers give most differing estimates as to the general welfare of a people whose patient peasants and skilful artisans have no security for enjoying the fruits of their labour under a government best skilled in extortion and oppression. The mass of the nation seem to be poverty-stricken small farmers, their toil fattening often absentee landlords, who, through inheritance, purchase, or court-favour, hold most of the land worth holding; while on the poor falls the main burden of taxation.



Persian Women in Outdoor Costume

## The World of To-day

Persia is oppressed by a locust swarm of aristocrats, among them hundreds of princes, legitimate and illegitimate, sharing the blood of the Kajar royal family that has held the throne since the eighteenth century. Governorships and other posts with good pickings largely went to those scions of royalty; yet the poorest slave might through court favour be promoted, like Daniel, to the ranks of the privileged. Till our own time the Shah was the sole fountain of honour, wealth and power, absolute in the style of Oriental despotism, here rudely shaken by recent attempts at a limited monarchy. Nasr-ed-Din, who made such spectacular progresses through Europe, could hardly be called an enlightened sovereign: when entertained at the seat of a great English duke, he is said to have advised the then Prince of Wales that his host should be executed as too powerful for a subject. But he brought Persia into touch with more civilized countries, and from them took hints at least for enhancing his power and state. The last generation of young Persians have more and more been sent abroad for education, who from Europe and America brought back damaging comparisons with the institutions of their native country. The schools fostered by missionaries began to be imitated in some more progressive cities. Among the less unintelligent mollahs of the capital there were some who at the outset looked favourably on reforming ideas as likely to increase their influence; and religious confraternities, answering to our monkish orders, gave a mould for secret societies; in general, however, the clergy showed more sympathy with conservatism, whereas the liberals often sat loose to orthodoxy. Newspapers, at first printed abroad to be clandestinely circulated, ventured to fan a spreading dissatisfaction, blown up into flame by the Japanese victories and the ensuing abortive revolution in Russia.

After a reign of half a century Nasr-ed-Din was assassinated in 1896 by a fanatic, supposed to have been prompted to the crime by hatred of innovations patronized under this Shah. His well-meaning heir

Muzaffar had a short and troubled reign, hampered by want of funds which drove Persia into foreign debt, secured on the custom-house revenue collected through a staff of Belgian officials. He had to please both Russia and England; but Russia from her northern frontier put the strongest pressure upon his weakness. A noisy section of his own people clamouring about reforms they scarcely understood, on his death-bed the Shah granted a constitution after summoning in 1906 the *Mejliss*, or Persian parliament. His successor Mohamed Ali swore to maintain the new order. But the inexperienced legislators made such a muddle of business not to be settled by means of fine sentiments and wordy harangues, that the spread of anarchy soon gave the Shah excuses for reaction. Feeling waxed hot between Royalists and Nationalists, the former understood to be backed by Russian, as the latter by British sympathies, though both powers professed a diplomatic neutrality. When a *coup d'état* was expected from the throne, more than 12,000 of the reforming party took *bast* (sanctuary) in the grounds of the British embassy, not to their improvement. The Shah's most effective force was a regiment of so-called Cossacks, under Russian officers. In 1908, an attempt on his life provoked him into using this bodyguard for the administration of a purge, stronger than Colonel Pride's, to his troublesome parliament, whose meeting-place was bombarded and taken by storm.

That seemed an end of the Persian constitution before it got into working order, and Mohamed Ali now tried a return to despotism, taking little heed of advice from his Russian and British counsellors. The reciprocal jealousies of the two foreign powers had been much allayed by the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, a friendly arrangement as to Tibet, Afghanistan, and Persia, in which last it was agreed that the northern side should be under Russia's thumb, and the south-eastern corner Britain's sphere of influence, the rest of the country held neutral ground between them. This partition, fitting in with their com-

mercial relations through the Caspian and the Persian Gulf respectively, did not please the Persians, who saw in it a step towards the loss of an independence which their domestic discords left them little strength to maintain. The land seethed with lawlessness and rebellion, not a few Persian patriots taking arms for excitement and plunder rather than with any clear idea of reforming the state. In the north-west corner, a desultory civil war fizzled for months in and about Tabriz, till ended by a Russian occupation of the province, not without fresh bloodshed. Ispahan was captured by the Nationalists. In 1909, two bodies of insurgents, making a junction from north and south, unexpectedly slipped through the Shah's troops to enter Teheran, where for some days went on a good deal of promiscuous shooting, fire-arms, as the *Times*' correspondent remarked, being to a Persian what matches are to a small child in Europe, things to play with and proofs of his courage in letting them off. There was more noise than slaughter, but, when his Cossack guard deserted him, the intimidated Shah in turn took sanctuary at the Russian embassy, and there consented to abdicate, retiring on a pension to Odessa. His little son Ahmed, tearfully forced on a tottering throne, was proclaimed Shah with an elderly prince of the house as Regent.

The Constitution being started afresh under this child-king, money was the main thing needed to grease its machinery, unless indeed honesty and practical sense on the part of those who had to work it. The growing debt of Persia still exposed her to foreign interference; and in the north Russia behaved much like a man in possession, while in the south Britain's less vigorous efforts failed to check disorder. A force of *gendarmes* under Swedish officers was organized to put down the brigandage fostered by revolutionary move-

ments; this body came to disbandment for want of regular pay; but later on was in part re-embodied at Shiraz under British command. Mr. W. M. Shuster, an American, was engaged to bring order into the finances of the bankrupt state; and he took a hopeful view of Persia's being able to right herself in time, but presently resigned, declaring his efforts tripped up at every turn among the intrigues of Russia and Britain, accused by him of trying to keep the country in dependence to their own advantage; but it seems that this sharp man of business failed partly through want of tact and experience in the hard task of "hustling the East".

The Great War involved Persia in fresh woes, for the north-west side of it made a Russian base against Armenia, and the south was swept by British troops, when wild tribesmen, disbanded gendarmes, and other partisans broke loose in the general confusion. A Turkish army invaded the country, thus dragged into the conflicts of Europe; but by the beginning of 1917 it had been cleared of these assailants, if not of the turbulent elements always ready for explosion among a people few among whom know what freedom means. Travellers report how, years after the granting of the constitution, this and that constituency had not troubled itself about sending representatives to the parliament, which through disputed elections remained for a time in abeyance. It was formally re-opened 1914 with the coronation of the young Shah, who appeared to show good will to us by resisting German overtures. The chief harvest of the revolution had as yet been a crop of helplessly puzzled politicians making targets for the vituperation of a reckless press; so Persia's best friends could not claim that hasty imitation of free institutions as a panacea for her inveterate ailments.

## PERSIAN PROVINCES AND CITIES

Persia proper has had one superiority over its distracted neighbours, in being mainly a homogeneous nation, proud of its famed past, and capable of a patriotic sentiment unknown among the medley subjects of Turkey in Asia. How far its consistency can resist the solvent forces at work both from within and without, time will show. Certain differences of wealth, interests, and production may be made apparent by a tour of its chief regions and most famous places, where we need not pause to mark all administrative divisions.

In the north-western corner, the Azerbaijan province, bordering on Caucasia, Armenia, and Kurdistan, is Persia's most prosperous and populous part through the advantages of a good rainfall, a fertile soil, an influx of industrious Christian and Jewish inhabitants increased of late by refugees from Turkish barbarity, and a closer exposure to outside influences. Containing more than one bygone capital, it was customarily put under the governorship of the Shah's heir, who here served an apprenticeship to the throne; but after the revolutionary troubles, it came to be occupied by Russian troops, masterfully keeping order in a region whose dealings are much with Caucasia and the Caspian on its northern edge. Tabriz, its chief city, was once called the largest in Persia, but, after much suffering from war and earthquakes, it appears now to have fallen below 'Teheran in numbers. Its dilapidated Blue Mosque, and its lofty brick "Ark", or Citadel, are believed to date from the days of Haroun Al Raschid; and in its lively and extensive bazaars are still carried on a considerable amount of commerce and manufacture, stimulated by the nearness of Russia, which was proposing to make a railroad this way, from her frontier station Julfa, already connected with Tabriz by motor-cars on what is one high-road of her trade with 'Teheran. The chief industry is the carpet-making for which Persia has been so noted.

This principal emporium of the kingdom is largely peopled by active Armenians, whose patriarch has his seat here. The country people are of Turki stock to a great extent, their language being Turkish. In the revolution, Tabriz was a stronghold of the Constitutionalists, held against the Shah's brigand troops.

The rich environs of the city, itself standing higher than Ben Nevis, are overshadowed by mountains that northwards spread over a projecting tongue of Persia to Mount Ararat, where the Aras river forms the northern frontier. In this direction, by Khoi and the pass of Bayazid, goes the main trade-route into Armenia. On the west a plain opens out to the great Lake Urumia, 80 miles long, said to be the saltiest sheet in the world, its shallows, studded with rocky islets, beautifully blue to the eye but offensive to the nose, miles off, by an odour of sulphuretted hydrogen. A dozen rivers are swallowed up in this lake after watering on its western shore the "Paradise of Persia", where a considerable town of the same name, Urumia, standing some way back from the lake, is said to have been the birthplace of Zoroaster, teacher of the ancient Persian faith, and in our time has made a centre of educational influences, three or four newspapers being printed at it even before the Revolution. Its population, 30,000 or so, as that of the hundreds of villages on a fertile plain around, is largely Christians of sorts, upon whom American, Anglican, Swiss, Catholic and Orthodox Russian missions here lavish rival persuasions, but hardly venture to risk their toleration by attempting to convert the Moslem inhabitants, in this corner to some extent Sunnite rather than Shiah. The missionaries' influence has secured some protection for their flocks, who devote themselves chiefly to agriculture, while Jewish communities, more apt for trade, were said of late years to be drifting off into Russia, a good customer for the raisins

that make the leading produce of this district.

Other old towns, where Mohammedan ascendancy is more unquestioned, are the Mongol ex-capital Maraga, to the east of Lake Urumia, and Ardebil, cradle of the Shiah Church in Persia, lying towards the northern frontier, a considerable place of business, that, along with Tabriz, has for its port Astara at the mouth of a little river bounding a southward projection of Russian territory along the flat Caspian shore. The road from Tabriz to Teheran goes along the south side of the Elburz mountains through the small province of Khamseh, named from its five old cities, of which only Zendsjan still flourishes in a modest way, while Sultanieh, an ex-capital, has dwindled to a village about an enormous mosque once enshrining the tombs of mediæval kings.

Round the south end of the Caspian curves the great Elburz chain, on which winter snows lie deep and low. The late Miss S. Macnaughtan, who sickened to death here in her brave effort to relieve the sufferings of the war, cried out against the cold of northern Persia, where she had half-thought to find herself in the tropics. Towards the Caspian coast this lofty range walls off a strip of fertile and well-wooded country at present forming the Persian provinces of Asterabad, Mazanderan, and Ghilan, that have seemed destined to fall into the hands of Russia, whose care-taking



The ruined Archway of the Blue Mosque, Tabriz

The Kabud Masjed (Blue Mosque)—so called on account of its covering of blue faience—is one of the finest specimens of Persian architecture. The mosque, which stands in ruins on the eastern side of the town, was built by Jehan Shah (1437-67), and its present dilapidated condition is due to the ravages of time, earthquakes, and war.

is so apparent here. Mazanderan, noted for its black cattle and sturdy ponies, gets the benefit of rain-clouds from the Caspian before they are spilt upon the Elburz slopes, so that this country has a very different aspect from most of Persia: thick forests, green meadows, tall hedgerows, leafy lanes, and villages of thatched cottages, which

Professor E. G. Browne found singularly English in appearance, as at one exceptional spot south of the mountains Dr. Bellew could almost have believed himself in Devonshire. There is only too much water on the lower plains, gathering into feverish marshes, edged by bare sand-dunes on the shore, near which stand the chief towns, Barfrush and Resht, the latter, with its adjacent harbour of the Enzeli lagoon, making the starting-point of the chief route from Europe by the Caspian into Persia. Not far off falls in the Safid Rud, having broken through the Elburz on its fertile course from the Azerbaijan mountains. Resht itself is thriving as a centre of silk-making; at Enzeli the chief buildings are a gimcrack royal palace and a lighthouse, which its Persian keepers did not always take the trouble to light, difficult as is the

entrance of the lagoon from the stormy and foggy Caspian, a port, indeed, improved by the Russians, who hoped to inherit the rice-fields and orange-gardens around it. The toll-bars on the road to Teheran were in Russian hands; and this road may be followed by Russian rails. Under the Elburz it joins that from Tabriz at Kazvin, a city of former note, near which is said to have been the stronghold of Hassan, "old man of the mountains", whose name, or the use of *hashish* by his followers, stood godfather to our word *assassin*.

South of the Elburz range extends the central province Irak-Ajemi, the ancient Media, at the northern edge of which, on a hollow plain beneath the mountains, stands the modern capital, Teheran. This city, of 250,000 people, is not very imposing in its array of mud walls and flat roofs; but



Mud Walls and Flat Roofs: a scene in Persia's capital, Teheran

The roof, with its protecting parapet, affords the women all the advantages of a "private box" from which to view the wedding procession which is passing in the street below.

during the reign of the late Shah it was improved by some finer buildings, and it has grown far beyond its old enclosure, the walls now making a circuit of some dozen miles. It is noted as kept clean for an Eastern city, and is well supplied with water by conduits. The mazes of the bazaars, where each trade finds its quarter, open out in wider thoroughfares, some of them lit by electric light and stirred by tramcars. The streets present a mixture of the drab and the gaudy in their half-baked brick walls, often stuccoed or tinted, the finest points being the tiled or gilt mosque domes rising over all Persian cities. A central point is the Gun Square, where the Imperial Bank neighbours an arsenal of artillery, old and new. The chief thoroughfare running through the city, is the Avenue of Ambassadors; so called from the foreign legations, among which the British Embassy ranks as the best modern building in Teheran. Others of note are a palace containing a native picture gallery, among them over a hundred portraits, including some of European ambassadors,<sup>1</sup> and a college founded by the Shah to give more enlightened teaching than can be had at the religious *medresses*. The Shah's palace covers a vast space with its irregular mass of halls, rose-gardens, and pavilions, giving no general effect in proportion to the riches it enshrines. In its great audience-hall, called the Mu-

seum, is, or used to be, shown to strangers a dazzling show of treasures worth many millions.<sup>2</sup> In another apartment is to be seen the gorgeous Peacock Throne, brought by Nadir Shah from Delhi, with its golden lions and peacocks and its adornments of gems, pearls, and enamel-work, valued at more than two millions; and elsewhere, among a further hoard of jewels and bullion, is kept that "Sea of Light", sister stone to the Koh-i-noor, both of which made part of the loot of Delhi. As an Afghan chief appreciatively remarked to Sir John Malcolm of his first view of Calcutta, "What a place to plunder!" But the ornaments of Teheran's mansions are as much supplied by gimcrackery as by jewellery.

The Shah has other palaces outside the city, where he can take refuge from the summer heats on the mountains above, as do most of the better-class citizens, in villages and villas along the Elburz slopes. The ambassadors find summer quarters a few miles out; ours at Gulahak treated as British territory, and its inhabitants lived under British protection. As Fuji-yama in view of Tokio, so here, forty miles away, rises the cone of Demavend, the most famous mountain of Persia (about 19,000 feet), whose snowy robe and turban of cloud hide the ashes of former eruptions, still threatened from time to time in violent earthquakes. Demavend, though declared inaccessible by

<sup>1</sup> When English envoys came here in George III's reign, the Persians looked doubtfully on their not being dressed like an ambassador from Elizabeth, whose costume had been preserved in a picture.

<sup>2</sup> "The decorations of this magnificent hall are in blue and white stucco of the hard fine kind, hardly distinguishable from marble, known as *gatch*, and much glass is introduced in the ceiling. The proportions of the room are perfect. The floor is of fine tiles of exquisite colouring arranged as mosaic. A table is overlaid with beaten gold, and chairs in rows are treated in the same fashion. Glass cases round the room and on costly tables contain the fabulous treasures of the Shah, and many of the Crown jewels. Possibly the accumulated splendours of pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, basins and vessels of solid gold, ancient armour flashing with precious stones, shields studded with diamonds and rubies, scabbards and sword-hilts incrustated with costly gems, helmets red with rubies, golden trays and vessels thick with diamonds, crowns of jewels, chains, ornaments (masculine solely) of every description, jewelled coats of mail dating back to

the reign of Shah Ismael, exquisite enamels of great antiquity, all in a profusion not to be described, have no counterpart on earth. They are a dream of splendour not to be forgotten. One large case contains the different orders bestowed on the Shah, all blazing with diamonds, a splendid display, owing to the European cutting of the stones, which brings out their full beauty. There are many glass cases from two to three feet high and twelve inches or more broad, nearly full of pearls, rubies, diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, flashing forth their many-coloured light—treasures not arranged, but piled like tea or rice. Among the extraordinarily lavish uses of gold and gems is a golden globe twenty inches in diameter, turning on a frame of solid gold. The stand and meridian are of solid gold set with rubies. The equator and ecliptic are of large diamonds. The countries are chiefly outlined in rubies, but Persia is in diamonds. The ocean is represented by emeralds. As if all this were not enough, huge gold coins, each worth thirty-three sovereigns, are heaped round its base. At the upper end of the hall is the Persian throne."—Mrs. Bishop's *Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan*.



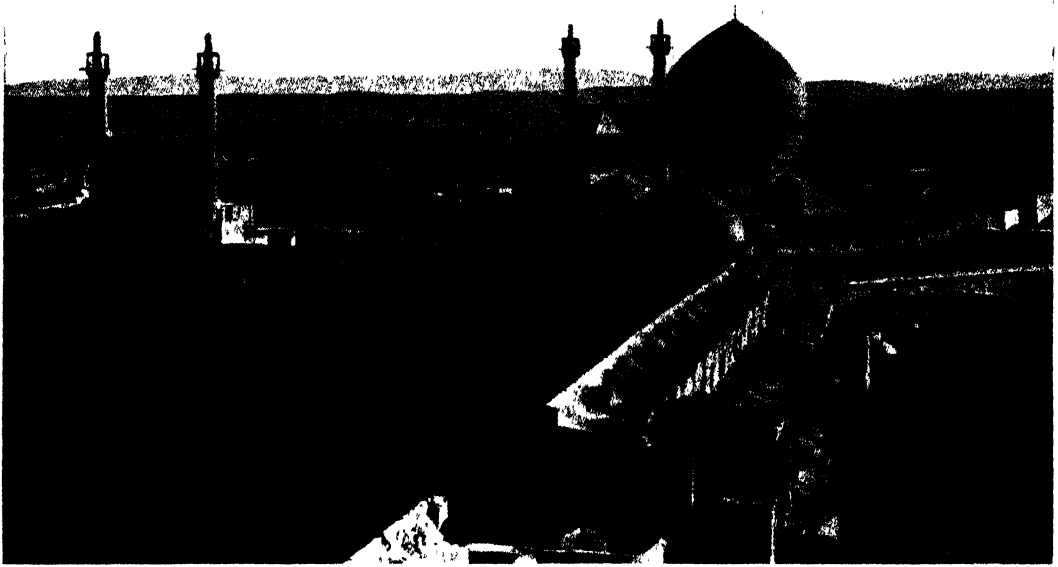
Persians, makes a climb more fatiguing than difficult. It has been ascended by several Europeans; for one, by Mr. E. Stack, who found the crater filled with snow and rimmed with rocks of almost pure sulphur. A clear view should extend over 50,000 square miles, this noble peak being visible 150 miles off through the transparent Persian air. "Teheran can be seen, and the Kohrud Mountains 160 miles south of it; the Great Kavir can be dimly perceived through its haze of heat to the south-east; while to the north—a faint blue field under the horizon—stretches the Caspian behind the cloudy forests of Mazanderan. On the right hand and on the left were mountains of from 10,000 to 12,000 feet in height; we overlooked them all with their thinly-scattered snows. But what a lifeless prospect! Teheran so many miles away, and all the rest mere desert and crag and desolation, with here and there a village lost on the bare mountain-side."

Ispahan, the ex-capital, lies about 200 miles south, the way passing by a great lake that has gathered in modern times through the destruction of a river embankment. A little outside Teheran, among the ruins of the ancient Median city Rhe or Rhages, the later town, Shah-Abdul-Azim, is hallowed as a sanctuary by its golden-domed mosque, so that, like other cities of refuge, it has become an Alsatia of rascaldom. The road is a fairly good one as far as Kum, another sanctuary and focus of scoundrels and fanatics, to which caravans of swaddled corpses are brought to be buried round the gilded tomb of Fatima, Imam Reeza's sister, and those of old kings and innumerable saints; it is also celebrated for its pottery and the blue tiles that adorn its mosques and shrines; but this industry has not kept it from falling into decay, any more than has its trade in tombstones and in entertaining tens of thousands of living pilgrims and burying thousands of dead yearly. A less gruesomely industrious place on the way is Kashan, which long had a name for brass and copper work and silk manufactures; but this too has fallen into pitiful dilapidation, and its 30,000 or so of inhabitants bear a proverbial reproach of

cowardice, as their town is ill-famed for scorpions.

Here strikes off south-eastward a road to Yezd, which, as before mentioned, is the chief seat of the old Fire-worshippers, and has been renowned for the beauty of its women. This and Kerman, more than 200 miles farther in the same direction, where also the Guebres still hold out, are the only considerable places on that side, each of them having a population of about 30,000, which represents the poverty of the south-eastern province Kerman, whose mountains border the Great Salt Desert extending towards Seistan and Khorassan.

A contrast to the deserts on this side are the magnificent western features of Persian Kurdistan, the decay of its towns due to man rather than Nature. Through it goes the great pilgrim road to Kerbela, reaching the mountains at Soltanabad, capital of the Irak province. Under the snowy crests of Mt. Elvend, it passes near Hamadan, noted like its neighbour cities for carpet-making, and for the adjacent ruins of Ecbatana, famed seat of Median and Parthian kings, where are shown the tombs of Esther and Mordecai, a goal of pilgrimage for Jews. Farther on comes Kermanshah, capital of the Kurdistan province of this name, still a city of some 60,000 people, but its dilapidation is thrown into sorry relief by traces of its old state and the impressive rock sculptures of the vicinity. Into this corner of Persia have overflowed from the Sultan's dominions Arabs, Turks, Kurds, and, towards the north, Armenians. The Kurds here largely belong to the curious Ali-Ilahist faith, which does not preach peace and good will, so Persia has exercised but a feeble control over the chronically rebellious mood of its tributary highlanders, and we need not be surprised to hear that in the revolution, Kermanshah came out strong "agin the Government". This is the last Persian city on the Baghdad trade route, which, through a pass in the Zagros Mountains, descends to a line of towers marking the Mesopotamian frontier and gains the Tigris by the valley of the Diala.



Brig.-Gen. Sir Percy Sykes

Ispahan: the *Maidan* (on the right) and the famous Masjid-i-Shah, or Royal Mosque (with dome)

From this edge, we turn back to the central city, Ispahan, the Moscow of Persia, said to have had a million inhabitants in the Golden Age of Shah Abbas the Great, but now shrunk to under 100,000, whose homes straggle among the ruins of its past grandeur upon a space of 20 miles in circuit, 5000 feet above the sea. Still, as Sir John Malcolm found a century ago, the old capital has an air of distinction in "its beautiful mosques, its palaces, splendid even in decay, its college with massy gates of silver, its magnificent bridges, its baths, its arched bazaars, its fountains, its far-famed river Zindeh-rud, and the gardens on its banks, shaded with lofty sycamores, and filled with every flower and fruit of the temperate zone". In the centre of the city is the Royal Square or *Maidan*, 560 yards long by 174 broad, where the Persian nobility used to play a national game which

now flourishes on British soil as polo. Round this are the chief public buildings; the vast palace, whose courts, pavilions, and gardens extend over a space miles in circuit; the richly-adorned royal mosque, whose huge dome makes a conspicuous feature of Ispahan seen from a distance; its principal bazaars—miles of lofty arcades and vaulted alleys opening into great open squares and caravanserais, too large for the traffic that fills some parts of them with a jostling throng of men and beasts, a display of wares from far and near, and a din of clamorous haggling such as goes with the doing of all business in the East. Two of the bridges of the river are remarkable for their galleried and arcaded structure, one of them being built upon a dam, over which the river, swollen by spring floods, rushes in artificial cataracts, making a sight for the people of Ispahan as the bore of the Severn does for

Gloucester. Another lion in the vicinity is the Mosque of the Shaking Minarets, both of which, though forty feet apart, vibrate when a person shakes himself at the top of one of them.

The royal palace here, said to be the finest in the kingdom, remained a scene of court life, this important province having been usually the satrapship of one of the Shah's sons. Of late the city has shown signs of reviving prosperity through its manufacture of wool, silk, and other wares, and it stands second only to Tabriz as a business centre. Bits of desert may be seen bordering the suburbs; but the country round, once more noted for its melon gardens, has been largely replanted with gay poppies, which prove a paying crop, though the opium extracted from them is inferior to that of India. Europeans mostly live across the river in the Armenian settlement Julfa, whose people were transplanted here by Shah Abbas from their town of the same name on the Araxes, as the Jews from Jerusalem to Babylon. Around its cathedral it has several churches, some of which now stand needless for a dwindled community; for not only is the Armenian fold poached on by Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries, but the men go away to seek their fortunes in India and elsewhere, leaving the women to earn a livelihood mainly by knitting stockings. Their red and white costumes, marking them off from the blue-clad Moslem women, brighten the mud-walled lanes of Julfa, through which run streams of water bringing life to its green enclosures.

South of Ispahan lies the largest province of Fars<sup>1</sup> or Faristan, "the real Persian heart of Persia", whose capital, Shiraz, is famed as the seat of Persian poetry and philosophy

as for the beauty of the rose-gardens, orchards, and cypress groves in which are set its turquoise domes and slender towers; and not its least charm is meadows of grass such as are rare in the East.<sup>2</sup> Much of this fame is due to its poets Hafiz and Sadi, whose graves in the blooming outskirts are venerated like those of our Shakespeare or Burns; but Shiraz also owes much to its rich, well-watered soil, and to a climate that cherishes the productions both of the south and the north. Grapes come here to perfection, and the strong Shiraz wine is celebrated, as is the oil extracted from its roses. It claims to have the finest bazaar in Persia, with a rich show of the silver and mosaic wares turned out by its artisans. Yet Shiraz is but a shadow of its former wealth, attested by the ruins that seem the chief production of the land, in this case largely brought about by a destructive earthquake some half-century ago. Its population has declined to about 50,000, who bear the name of being more lively and friendly, and less fanatical, than the inhabitants of the northern cities. It may yet come to be best known as the birthplace of that reformer who was the original prophet of the Babi community.

To the west of Ispahan and Fars, Luristan rises in parallel ridges, 10,000 feet and more high, falling southward to the flats of Arabistan at the head of the Persian Gulf. The name Diz, recurring among these mountains, marks almost inaccessible rock fastnesses of the wild Lur and Bakhtiari clans, who in manners and customs resemble their neighbours the Kurds, living in a state of inter-tribal feuds and of unwilling submission to Persia; a Bakhtiari contingent, indeed, played an unexpected part in the

<sup>1</sup> "F" and "P" are readily interchangeable in the language, as shown by Ispahan, properly *Isfahan*.

<sup>2</sup> "Hard by the tomb of Hafiz is a garden, one of many of the kind round Shiraz. It is called the 'Garden of the Seven Sleepers', and is much frequented in summer by Shirazis of both sexes. A small open kiosk, in shape something like a theatre proscenium stands in the centre, its outside walls completely hidden by rose and jasmine bushes. Inside all is gold moulding, light blue, green, and vermillion. A dome of looking-glass reflects the tessellated floor.

Strangely enough, this garish mixture of colour does not offend the eye, toned down as it is by the everlasting twilight shed over the mimic palace and garden by overhanging branches of cypress and yew. An expanse of smooth-shaven lawn, white beds of lily and narcissus, marble tanks bubbling over with clear, cold water, and gravelled paths winding in and out of the trees to where, a hundred yards or so distant, a sunk fence divides the garden from a piece of ground two or three acres in extent—a perfect jungle of trees, shrubs, and flowers."—H. de Windt's *Ride to India*.



Brig.-Gen. Sir Percy Sykes

A Relic of Persia's ancient Grandeur: ruins of the Palace of Xerxes, Persepolis

A magnificent double flight of steps—so easy as to be ascended on horseback—leads to the terrace shown above, on which stand the ruins of the palaces burned by Alexander the Great in 330 B.C. The Palace of Darius is in the background.

Nationalist capture of Teheran. Dizful seems now to be the largest town, near which are huge mounds on the site of Susa, "Shusan the palace", one of Persia's many bygone capitals, where notable excavations have been made under military protection, and the tomb of Daniel records his adventure here with the lions. In the same vicinity, a point of modern interest is the oil-fields tapped by British enterprise, under difficulties of interference from unscientific Bakhtiari chiefs, some of whom, however, have now seen well to take shares in the undertaking. The people have used the thick surface oil as bitumen for caulking boats. The finer oil has to be drawn up from deep wells and pumped over a ridge into a pipe-line leading it to the banks of the Shat-el-Arab. The provincial capital is Shuster, a town much decayed since the days when its irrigation dam made founda-

tions for a bridge; but it should revive from standing on the Karun, the one river in Persia that is navigable for any distance. Swollen by mountain tributaries, this stream reaches the Shat-el-Arab at the quasi-independent port of Mohammera, grown lively of late years through increased trade with Persia, now that steamers, but for one interruption from rapids, can stem the tortuous course of the Karun to within a few miles of Shuster; but as part of its channel is on the Mesopotamian flats, this navigation might be closed by a hostile power.

The road from Ispahan to Shiraz skirts another mountainous region drained into the closed basin of Lake Niris. On this road travellers seldom fail to notice for its extraordinary position the poor village of Yezdeghast, a close packed mass of houses huddled along a crest of rock, accessible only by a bridge over a deep chasm, "like

a picture by Gustave Doré". But the most famous sight of this region is a group of ruins north-east of Shiraz, chief among them the stupendous remains of Persepolis. This world-renowned monument of Persia's past grandeur was already old when Alexander the Great fired one of its halls in a fit of drunken fury; yet the dry climate has preserved through successive conquests a forest of columns, halls, and sculpture carved from the enduring limestone of the district. These remains stand upon a partly artificial platform ascended by a broad and easy staircase, up which one can ride on horseback to the porch guarded by colossal monsters; then other stairs lead to terraces, where the buildings were displayed against a background of rocks in whose face elaborate carvings mark the entrance of royal tombs. The principal structures, to be traced by broken walls and pillars, are the Hall of Xerxes, the palace of Darius, the palace of Xerxes, and beside them the vast Hall of a Hundred Columns, where the Great King sat in spacious state.<sup>1</sup>

For a full and careful account of these monuments the reader may be referred to the second volume of Lord Curzon's work on Persia. He was not so much scandalized as some travellers have been by the way in which among ancient carvings and inscriptions are found scrawled modern names, both European and Oriental, that, indeed, seem hardly out of place when among them appear records of visits by such men as Niebuhr, Thevenot, Chardin, R. K. Porter, John Malcolm, and H. M. Stanley. Lord Curzon's book describes also the wonderful

rock sculptures at Shapur, west of Shiraz, relics of that mighty Sapor, who elsewhere left traces of his taste for building.

South of Shiraz, through the rugged mountains of Laristan, forming a series of broken stairs, one descends from the interior plateau to the shore of the Persian Gulf, pronounced by sweltering voyagers the hottest sea in the world. Between this and the mountain terraces of the interior lies a narrow strip of flat land that seems to offer itself as way for a railroad from the Euphrates Valley to India.

"These torrid plains," says Lord Curzon, "called by the natives Garmsir (hot region), extend to the foot of the hills, where a lower sandstone ridge frequently intervenes before the main range, or mountains proper, known as Sardsir (cold region), are reached. Upon these no speck of green, no token of life is visible. Pink they glow in the early morning under the rising sun; gray they glisten under the full noontide blaze, when their veteran scars can be traced or counted in the field-glass; lilac they linger longer on the landscape as the fugitive afternoon throws them into deepening shade; umber they merge and are swallowed up in the umber night. The last impression of the traveller, as he leaves Persia, is that wherewith he entered it. It is a land of mountains, and oh for a sight of green grass!"

Three hundred miles up the gulf, south-west of Shiraz, comes Bushire, the chief seaport of Persia; yet this has no proper harbour, vessels lying in an anchorage two or three miles out, even farther. It is a dirty, unhealthy place of some 10,000 people,

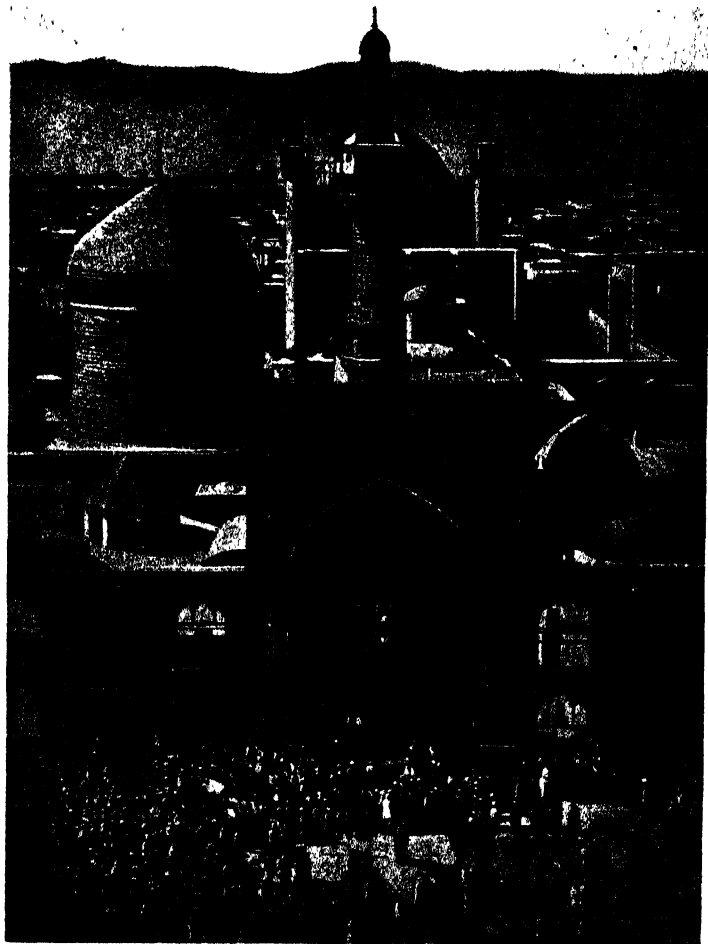
<sup>1</sup> "The long row of figures, arranged in processional form around the base of the buildings and up the sides of the staircases, are, when first seen, unintelligible and confusing, but all these, together with those in the palaces of the kings, are, on further examination and consideration, seen to present a oneness in composition which is exceedingly remarkable. The one theme which these figures go to represent, and the one idea which is dominant throughout the arrangement and sculpture of these remarkable buildings, is the greatness and glory of one man: 'The Great King', 'The King of kings', 'The King of all inhabited countries', 'The King of this great earth, far and near', as the cuneiform inscriptions proudly term him. Not only do these sculptures help to make us realize the might, the glory, and the power of these Eastern monarchs,

but the procession of figures shows us the uses for which the gigantic halls, such as the Hypostyle Hall of Xerxes and the Hall of One Hundred Columns were intended. Some of the columns of the former still stand towering upwards 60 feet high; those of the latter, the one which Alexander in his drunken freak permitted to be burnt, all lie shattered. In them the King of kings held his court, receiving, as is shown in the sculptures, the representatives and tribute-bearers from numerous subject kingdoms. We see them, in their different national garbs, bearing presents from the nethermost parts of the earth—tusks of ivory, ingots of gold, skins of animals, the famed horses of Armenia, the humped oxen from India, and the double-humped camels from Bactria."—E. Treacher Collins' *In the Kingdom of the Shah*.

who, for half the year, declares Mr. Collins, are fain to sleep on the roofs of their houses and curse the dawning of the pitiless sun, under which their only good drinking-water has to be brought from miles away. This uninviting town was taken by us in our Persian war of 1857, when Sir James Outram won a battle at Kushab on the road to Shiraz; and it has since been garrisoned by a British-Indian force, not strong enough to prevent its trade being harassed by brigandage in the interior, nor has our naval police availed to stop smuggling along the coast.

The mouth of the gulf is the Strait of Ormuz, so called from the island whose name Milton coupled with India's as a proverb of wealth, and which served as a resting-place for the Parsees before their forced emigration into India. This is now deserted, its once famous port being transferred to Bender Abbas on the mainland, which, indeed, has no proper harbour, but a shallow anchorage, where boats bring out goods to be shipped; and, instead of pearls, ivory, and cloth of gold, a recent traveller has to tell us how his vessel here took in grindstones and senna-leaves. Kishm is a larger island in the strait, and there are others in the gulf, among which pearl-fishing is still carried on "under Oman's green water". Oman, or Muscat, is an Arab state on the opposite shore, under protection of Britain, by whose cruisers peace and order are kept on a sea

that once swarmed with pirates. Bender Abbas is practically an Arab town, over which and its neighbourhood the Sultan of Oman long claimed sovereignty. The Gulf of Oman makes the outer reach of the Persian Gulf, beyond the straits, where on the north shore Persia extends upon the Mekran coast, the eastern half of which belongs to Baluchistan. Within the strait, a little to the west of Kishm, Lingah, a



One of Persia's most sacred Places: the tomb of the Imam Reza, Meshed

This magnificent shrine is visited by more than 100,000 pilgrims annually, but, as is usual in Persia, it is not open to Christians or other "unbelievers".

## The World of To-day

town of perhaps 10,000 people, is the only gulf port that possesses a small wet-dock; but it, like the neighbouring roadsteads, is frequented chiefly by coasting craft.

The Mekran coast fringes that scorched wilderness where Alexander's army had almost perished on its march back from India, under fiery heat as wasting as the bitter cold that assailed Napoleon's retreat from Moscow. Its northern part, styled Sarhad, was first made known to us in 1885 by Captain Jennings, who here discovered an active volcano more than 12,000 feet high. The district to the south is more accessible from the sea, but still remains seldom visited by Europeans. In this corner Persia has been trying to extend its authority over wild tribes who are forced to pay tribute as far as they can be overawed by military expeditions into their fastnesses; but such authority is vague, and what seems a political chaos separates the Persian from the British-Indian sphere of influence. The capital of the Persian governorship is Bam-pur, upon a river of the same name that loses itself in the desert plateaus. Farther south in the Persian Mekran comes Khasarkand, but no town in this part of the Shah's kingdom appears to be much more than a name on the map.

On this side, nearly half of Persia is taken up by enormous stretches of arid land, in the centre of which stretches the Dasht-i-Kavir or Great Desert, one of the most forbidding regions of the earth, some parts of it said to be sunk below the level of the Caspian, while others rise in bare ridges overlooking sandy wastes and wide sheets of salt. On the west it passes into the large and rather less withered province of Kerman, already mentioned. On the east, it merges with the Afghan sands of Seistan, a loosely defined region whose main feature is the great lake-swamp, lined by tall reeds and feathery tamarisk, that within Persian territory absorbs the waters of the Helmand and of some smaller streams. These make

ribands of green alluvium, else the general landscape shows a stony, treeless flat, here and there studded by ruins that redden the ground for miles with fragments of buildings and tiles. The capital of the Persian part of Seistan is Husseinabad, where the hovels of a few thousand people are dominated by the half-dismantled fortress of Nasirabad, seat of a Persian governor.

Along the eastern border, stony ridges and stretches of desert lead up to less barren country, the mountainous north-eastern corner of Persia, Khorassan, "Province of the Sun", cradle of that mysterious "Veiled Prophet" whose tale was told to Lalla Rookh. The name of this region once extended across the Herat River into Afghanistan, that here bounds Persia on the east. On the north, high mountain ridges, prolonging the Elburz chain, look over the wastes and oases of Russian Transcaspia, where strong rule has made a great difference to the Shah's subjects. The country is dotted with watch-towers, forts of refuge, and other strongholds now falling into decay; but a generation or so ago the poor people went in constant terror of bold Turkomans, who, from across the border, pushed their raids for hundreds of miles, sometimes even to the heart of Persia, the Government giving no protection unless by fitful efforts or in the shape of Kurdish myrmidons, who might take a hand in devastation on their own account; but the robbers over the border came to be drilled and roughly disciplined as Russian Cossacks. So far from their native heights, a whole tribe of Kurds was settled by Shah Abbas in the fertile valley of Kuchan, where an old city of that name was destroyed by earthquakes at the end of last century, but has been rebuilt some miles away. A rich bait for freebooters would be the caravans of pilgrims to Meshed, the capital of Khorassan, mixed as they were with traders, seeking safety in numbers.<sup>1</sup> Now, such a journey of devotion, or business, or both combined may be under-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bellew (*From the Indus to the Tigris*) describes one of these pilgrim caravans which he fell in with. "It was a curious spectacle, from the variety of costume and nationality and conveyance, all jumbled

together in jostling confusion. We passed each other with mutual stares of wonderment, and I did not appreciate the novelty of the scene till it was gone from my sight. There were great shaggy

taken with less dread of Hadji Baba's experiences on this much-travelled road, its present dangers being snow-storms or dust-storms, and the venomous vermin that swarm in the decayed caravanserais built along it by Shah Abbas the Great.

Meshed, a city of 60,000 people, is one of the most sacred places in Persia, a visit to which gives the true believer the title of *Meshedi*, only inferior to that won by the supreme pilgrimage to Mecca. This celebrity it owes to the tomb of the Imam Reeza, Persia's patron saint, whose renown draws here the dead as well as the living, for it is held a privilege to be buried in his sanctifying neighbourhood, and the walled area, several miles in circuit, is largely taken up by close-packed cemeteries, that do not go to make it healthy for the living. In the vicinity are the ruins of Tous, a flourishing city under the early caliphs, burial-place of Firdousi and of the great Haroun Al Raschid. For all its holiness, the population of Meshed is largely made up of swindlers, gamblers, and other scoundrels, drawn here through the sanctuary privilege attaching to the mass of domes and minarets consecrated by its saint's memory. It is a seat of commerce as well as of devotion, being a junction of caravan routes through Turkestan and Afghanistan; before long it may be terminus of a branch from the Transcaspian railway, and the Russians have already provided a fair road to Askabad.

This holy place has a special industry in the manufacture of vases, pots, pipes, and other articles made from a soft blue stone quarried in the vicinity; and it is also

centre of the trade in turquoises, got chiefly from mines near Nishapur, to the west of Meshed, site of another great city of old that was Omar Khayyam's burial-place. There is said to be coal in the mountains to the north, where on the Russian frontier stands the natural citadel of Kalat-i-Nadiri, in which Nadir Shah deposited for a time the treasures he robbed from India. Its walls of mountain cliff struck Colonel Valentine Baker as one of the world's wonders; but this Eastern Gibraltar has been allowed to go to ruin, and it is such an unhealthy post that soldiers stationed here are apt to desert from fear of fever. Only in parts does Khorassan justify its renown as one of the flourishing corners of a land half desert and half the rest marked by decay.

We must leave Persia with somewhat uncertain prospects. Parts of it overrun by different armies during the last few years, its rulers for a time inclined to the attitude of "sitting on the fence"; but the War's result threw it mainly under the influence of Britain, not altogether to the satisfaction of her allies, still less to that of Russia's new regime. On the north side it was presently troubled by Bolshevik intrigues, incitements to revolt, and open invasion, which we were ill-prepared to resist in the weariness of war that had lulled us into dreams of universal peace. A "Red" invasion from Baku joined hands with the local agitator Kuchik Khan, who had already given trouble as leader of a secret society said to be active in Northern Persia; and this ape of Lenin proclaimed a Soviet republic at Resht, appealing for French and

camels bearing huge panniers, in which were cooped three or four veiled bundles of female beauty, rolling from side to side like a ship in a heavy swell. There were others mounted by wiry Arabs in their thin rope-turbans, or by thick-set Tartars in their shaggy sheep-skin caps, swaying to and fro with an energy that led one to suppose that the speed of the camel depended on the activity of their movements. There were pannier-mules bearing veiled ladies and their negress slaves, accompanied by their Persian lords, gay in dress and proud, on their handsome little steeds. There were quiet calculating merchants, with flowing beards and flowing robes, borne along by humble ponies as absorbed in thought as their riders; and there were sleekly-attired priests serene in their conscious dignity, comfortably flowing with

the tide on their well-groomed and neatly-caparisoned mules. There were others too, a mixed crowd of footmen and women, all dusty and hot, struggling on to keep pace with their mounted wayfarers. How many will lag behind and fall to the Turkman's share? There are amongst these whole families emigrating in search of food and work; father and mother each bear an infant on their backs, and two or three of tender years trot by their side. There are tattered beggars, reduced by sheer want; and there are other beggars, the impudent, idle, and dissolute scoundrels who impose on the community by an ostentatious assumption of the religious character, through no other claim than that of their bold importunity, backed by noisy appeals to true believers in the name of God and Ali."



## The World of To-day

American sympathy against British interference in the country.

An Anglo-Persian agreement was proposed, under which our advice should help the Shah's government to credit and military efficiency; but this tutelage was looked on askance by other Western powers, and Persia presently took a higher tone of self-assertion, demanding at Paris, along with an extension of territory east and west, the abolition of the consular courts and consular guards that served for the protection of foreigners, and the evacuation of Persia by foreign troops. Besides guarding the approach to the capital, our officers had done much elsewhere to keep order, till the shifty delays of the Persian Government to ratify the proposed agreement, or to call the Medjliss together for considering it, ended in our troops being withdrawn. The Shah's brigade of Cossacks had not shone in efforts to drive the intruders from their lodg-

ment on the northern coast; but, early in 1921, this prætorian guard unexpectedly took on itself to make a *coup d'état* at the capital, setting up as Prime Minister Zia-ed-din, an ex-newspaper editor, who had the name of being able and patriotic. He began his administration with professions of goodwill to Britain, promises of reform, and performance to the extent of raising funds by mulcting official profiteers, corruptly enriched during the country's misery and confusion. But this reformer met with such opposition from the interests assailed, that after a few weeks came about another revolution by which the Cossacks' leader, Reza Khan, dictated a new ministry, soon again overthrown. The political balance here being so uncertain, the one safe prediction is that any Persian Government's wisest policy would be to welcome assistance from the power most able to repair and relaunch this derelict state.



Courtyard of a Persian Caravanseraï

# AFGHANISTAN AND BALUCHISTAN

## AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan has been well called a "quick-set hedge between Russia and India", on which, indeed, one of the parties concerned has come by sore pricks. With Baluchistan it makes the vulnerable north-western frontier of India, along which our troops keep guard for a thousand miles. It is mainly a labyrinth of high stony table-lands, bristling with peaks and ridges, hollowed also by green valleys and ravines, often of extraordinary fertility. Across it the Hindoo Koosh range runs south-westward from the Pamirs, rising here and there into summits not much short of 25,000 feet, forming a colossal amphitheatre above Kabul, then from its central point, the Koh-i-Baba ("Father of Mountains"), splitting up into three chains that take much the same direction. The long lateral spurs of this range, the ancient Paropamisus or "Indian Caucasus", spread over more than half the country. On the east, towards the Indus plains, runs the Suliman range, on whose highest point, "Solomon's Throne", Moslem legend places the resting of Noah's Ark; and behind, other mountain masses roughen this side. Between the branches of these two mountain systems the south-west of Afghanistan sinks into a great sandy desert such as covers the larger part of Baluchistan. To this corner flows the Helmand, the largest of Afghan rivers, that, after distributing its mountain waters over a fertilized plain, takes an erratic course through the desert into a lake overflowing as the vast Seistan or Hamun swamp on the Persian frontier. The northern drainage of the Hindoo Koosh is into the Oxus, or by the independent

streams which we have seen losing themselves in the wastes of Turkestan. Such is the fate of the Herat River, at first flowing westward between the broken chains of the Hindoo Koosh. The Kabul River and other smaller streams fall eastward into the Indus, through wild gorges that have so often poured plundering hosts on to the rich plains of Hindostan.

The climate, as has usually to be said of Asian uplands, is on the whole a dry one, with extremes of heat and cold. Many of the inhabited parts, standing higher than any British mountain, have months of frost and snow, by which some of the mountain-tops are always whitened. The Afghan winter made a terrible ordeal for our poor people flying for their lives towards the Khyber Pass in that fatal retreat of 1842. In summer the sun burns so fiercely that eggs can be cooked in glowing desert sands, where the thermometer may mark 175° F., and violent winds raise stifling dust-storms. Winter snows and rains are to be looked for till March; then the scorching heat comes on so fast that by May, in favoured spots, crops are ripening, and fruit begins to drop upon rose bushes showing a mass of bloom, while on the colder heights above people may be seen preparing to plant their fields. Sometimes brownly clad by parched shrubs such as *asafœtida*, a kind of fennel whose juice makes a strong-smelling drug for Europe but a condiment for the country people, the stony mountains hide nooks in which flourish luxuriant melons, grapes, mulberries, apricots, pomegranates, apples, pears, almonds, and other nuts. Dried

fruit and wool are the chief exports to neighbouring countries. On some of the moister slopes there are thick forests, and the river courses wind through copses of tamarisk, willow, and mimosa; but on the whole the country is poor in timber. The fertilized plains bear heavy crops of various grain and fodder, often cut three or four times in the course of the season. Cotton, sugar, tobacco, and indigo can be grown in the warmer parts. This culture, of course, depends on economy of the rapid streams by irrigating channels, and on the peculiar *karez* system of tapping springs under a slope and bringing them out by tunnels beneath the parched surface.

The herds of the Afghans are chiefly sheep and goats, whose wool makes the shawls and rugs known abroad, or is half-woven, half-felted into the coarse brown cloth of the national winter dress, in summer supplied by dirty linen or cotton. Their cattle are of inferior breed, and the same may be said of their horses in general, though many of a better class are reared for exportation to Persia and India. Camels are used on the plains, and some elephants have been introduced for the Government service. Asses, both wild and tame, are at home in the mountains, where small lions, leopards, wolves, and bears may be met, as well as wild sheep, jackals, gazelles, and foxes. In Baluchistan the tiger is not unknown. In the north there is a breed of ferocious dogs which, kept by suspicious herdsmen, are almost as formidable to strangers as when running wild in packs. The mountains nurse many ravenous birds, and others, among them our familiar cuckoo. Then Afghanistan has its share of venomous reptiles, and of the winged and stinged plagues that torment Oriental life.

The inhabitants are a very mixed body, including Usbegs in the north, and other Tartar peoples, such as the Hazarachs, half-bred Aryans like the Tajiks, settlers of Indian origin in the towns, the pagan "Kafirs" in the north-east, and bands of Jats, or gipsies, who wander over Persia also, selling sieves and mats or playing the potter and tinker. The dominant, if not

most numerous, race of Afghans, often known in India as Pathans, are fanatically Moslem in faith, and of a fiercely warlike character that gives them mastery over milder elements of the population. There is much question as to the antecedents of this people, for whom, as for so many others, an ancestry has been found in the Jews; and one tribe, to whom the name properly belongs, is said to claim descent from Afghana, a son of Jeremiah. Features of what we know as the Jewish type are often noticeable among these tribes. Other authorities give them an Aryan or an Arab origin; some ethnologists, indeed, have looked on this Afghan plateau as the original breeding-place of the race commonly called Caucasian. The polite speech is Persian. The name Afghan is loosely applied to all the hardy highlanders of this region, Duranis, Ghilzais, Pathans, &c., who have in common their Pushtoo language, haughtily rude manners, and suspicious hatred of strangers and infidels, but can hardly be said to form a nation, rather a jumble of clans and sub-clans constantly at feud with each other, jealous of their turbulent independence, and united only in spasms of resistance to a foreign enemy. Now and again something like national cohesion has been brought about under some strong personality that could more or less completely gain the allegiance of the most powerful tribes and their *sirdars*, or chiefs; then the death or dethronement of such a ruler has thrown them afresh into lawless ferment. The modern state of Afghanistan began to take its varying shape in the eighteenth century, built up by the chief Ahmad Shah among the ruins of Nadir Shah's Persian empire.

Our Indian Empire has a natural interest in the firm government of this neighbour, so more than once we have interfered, not always wisely, in disputes for its uneasy throne. In the early years of Queen Victoria's reign the first Afghan war left its painful memories. A British army marched to Kandahar and Kabul, re-established a former Amir against the usurper, Dost Mahomed, and for three years held pos-



The famous Khyber Pass: a native caravan passing Ali Musjid Fort

Twice a week caravans traverse the pass, handed over from an Afghan to a British escort, or vice versa; but tourists may not proceed beyond the point shown above. The pass is now policed by loyal Afridis enrolled as the Khyber Rifles.

session of the capital. But Dost Mahomed proved more of a man than our puppet prince; the Afghans, resenting foreign interference, rallied round that bold pretender; and though he surrendered to us, this seemed only to inflame the popular insurrection. Our political officers were murdered at Kabul, where our troops found themselves cooped up in weak cantonments, hampered by a helpless host of women, children, and camp-followers, the sepoys, who formed a large part of the force, unmanned by the cold of Afghan uplands. Some of the leaders, too, seem to have lost heart and head. At the beginning of 1842 the army set out on its disastrous retreat towards the Indian plains, through frozen passes swarming with vindictive foes. A treaty had been entered into with the chiefs, who could not or would not restrain their ferocious countrymen. Soon every

stage of the miserable retreat became a massacre. The ladies, children, and married officers were surrendered to Akbar Khan, son of Dost Mahomed, and, after trying vicissitudes, came at last into safety. The general and other officers had been added to this band of prisoners. The army and its train, a mob of fugitives, struggled on against hunger and cold and the constant attacks of tribesmen who lined the wild gorges on their blood-stained way. The native allies deserted to the enemy. Frost-bitten sepoys dropped, perishing in despair. The Europeans, split up into straggling parties, fought vainly against hopeless odds. Those who escaped slaughter were starved in the snow. A single survivor, Dr. Brydon, rode up to Jelalabad, held by General Sale, whose defence of this tumble-down fortress made the one bright spot in a disastrous story. The rest had left their

bones in the passes, retraced by an army under General Pollock, which took bootless revenge on Kabul and recovered the captives, but was content to withdraw, leaving Dost Mahomed in possession of Afghanistan, after so much bloodshed wasted in a short-sighted effort to keep him out of it.

For a generation now Britain was glad to leave this formidable country to itself; then again we became drawn into its troubled politics. Dost Mahomed's son, Shere Ali, was understood to be intriguing with Russia, whose advances in Central Asia seemed to threaten our Indian Empire. As a counterpoise to Russian diplomacy, we insisted on having a resident envoy at Kabul. This demand was at first refused, but in 1878 a military demonstration overawed the Afghans, when they found that no help was to be had from Russia. Shere Ali died, succeeded by his son, Yakoub Khan, who received Sir Louis Cavagnari as the English Resident. But, as so often has been the case, the fierce populace proved harder to reckon with than their rulers. Cavagnari and other members of the mission were massacred at Kabul. Then followed that war in which Lord Roberts rose to fame, one not without glory for our arms, yet with some anxious moments and heavy losses. In 1880 we withdrew, having placed on the throne a grandson of Dost Mahomed, Abdur Rahman, whose career had hitherto been schooled by trying experiences of banishment and pretendership.

This prince came to power somewhat fortuitously, in the absence of a better candidate, but our king-making in Afghanistan turned out for once a fortunate experiment. Abdur Rahman proved the man to bind together in a more homogeneous state what had been a "bundle of provinces". By a mixture of ruthless despotism and wily prudence he in time made himself undisputed master of the whole country, to whose interests he devoted no small ability. Though owing much to the politic generosity of the Russians, among whom he had spent years of exile, he behaved honourably to Britain, carrying out the intention that

his dominion should be a barrier between these two rival powers; but in 1885 a collision of his troops with the Russians at Pandjeh had nearly dragged us into war. As soon as he felt firm in his seat, he set about improving the condition of a backward people by putting the finances in order, by creating or reforming courts of justice, by constructing roads and freeing them from robbery, and by developing commerce and industry.

In the interesting autobiography published by him, he enumerates, among the arts recently introduced: mining in various forms, electrical and other engineering, the construction of traction-engines, steam-hammers, and telephones, coining rupees, distilling, boot-making, the manufacture of soap and candles, the study of medicine, surgery, and dentistry. One means of civilization he frankly confesses to neglecting. He had no money to spare for making railways in such a difficult country, where they might serve to aid invaders; and he had almost quarrelled with us for bringing a line to his frontier. His main effort was to form a regular army that might make Afghanistan an impregnable stronghold, hitherto best defended by the fitful rage of fanatical tribesmen, who rushed to death with blind devotion, but quickly dispersed at the least check, or in the dissensions following victory. Strong fortifications, armed with modern ordnance, were erected at the chief strategic points; factories and foundries turned out cannon, rifles, and ammunition; and great quantities of military stores were accumulated for the use of an army believed to number from 40,000 to 60,000, which its master found some difficulty in subjecting to military discipline on British models. In these improvements, directed to a great extent by his own intelligence, the Amir freely used the services of European artificers, treated honourably and considerately; but his aim was to become independent of foreign help, and, while fulfilling engagements entered into with Britain as chief patron, in return for an annual subsidy, he clearly let it be understood that "Afghanistan for the Afghans"

was the motto of his policy. That he carried the people along with him in his use of authority was shown by the unopposed succession of his son in 1902, when it was feared that the death of Abdur Rahman would have brought about a general commotion that might have spread beyond Afghanistan. One side of the father's character is illustrated by the fact that he had married his heir to some half-dozen wives from the families of chief military and religious personages in the country.

The next Amir, Habibullah, "Lamp of Faith and Nation", as he signed himself, was understood to have been carefully trained for his difficult dignity; and what glimpses we had of his court show him concerned to hold in check the ignorant fanaticism of his people, and to promote education, agriculture, and manufactures. Like his father, he ruled absolutely with

whims of rough and ready justice designed "to make the punishment suit the crime"; but at the beginning of his reign he tried the experiment of convoking a sort of parliament. While "no admission except on business" continued to be the rule of this dominion, he invited into his service Europeans as instructors in various industries, who had a hard struggle against the pig-headed jealousy of native craftsmen and officials. A Turkish officer, trained in Germany, found the same hindrances in stiffening the discipline of an army that was one of the Amir's chief concerns. German intrigues did not fail to be brought to bear on him, but it is supposed that Habibullah turned a deaf ear on such attempts to make mischief for Britain.

Whether this loyalty would have survived any series of British disasters, is a test we may hope never to see applied. But during the Great War, exaggerated reports of



A Village in North Afghanistan

Ikbal Ali Shah

German success stirred Afghan patriotism to an excitement in which Habibullah was assassinated. When an attempt of his brother to seize the throne did not succeed, his son, Aminullah, sought popular support by showing insolent hostility to Britain. His military demonstrations on the border, however, were so effectively countered, and the appearance of an aeroplane over Kandahar proved such an effectual argument for peace, that the Afghans once more submitted to accept our ascendancy. But still they have little love for their dominant neighbour; and Bolshevik intrigues have been at work here to inflame their ill-will, while the Indian frontier was disturbed by an influx of Moslem fanatics deserting our rule in such numbers that the Amir saw well to bar out this invasion.

The realm he inherited is a compact mass of some 600 by 500 miles, about 250,000 square miles, with a population of five or six millions. It mainly consists of three provinces centred at Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat, which have at different times been seats of independent government. These are the only places that can be called cities; and some half-dozen others may rank as more or less considerable towns. The rest are little better than fortified villages, dwellings enclosed within a square of mud walls and towers, often adjoined by the ruins of once important strongholds whose very names may be sometimes unknown. The whole country is dotted by such remains that, with gigantic cliff sculptures and excavations in the rock, make monuments of a forgotten past. The land shows often ruined by the neglect of its life-giving watercourses, and this on the potentially richest spots which most surely tempt lawless neighbours. A beautiful valley, dotted by groves and fields, so as to seem an abode of smiling peace, has been found so distracted by blood-feuds that the inhabitants scarcely durst stir a few hundred yards from their fortified dwellings.

To the destructive force of conquest and aggression must be added that of frequent earthquakes, commonly slight, but sometimes violent enough to throw down the

already dilapidated walls of an Afghan fort. Mountain storms, too, often rise to convulsions of nature, working serious damage by floods and landslips. The arbitrary whim of chiefs has been another cause for desertion of towns and shifting of population. "The Afghans", says M. Ferrier, "have become so used to sudden and forced displacements that they never attach themselves to the soil; their tent is their country. In two days a family will build themselves a good house of earth, roofed, with the door only made of wood; and the facility with which they do this explains, as I have already said, how so many towns appear and disappear without leaving a trace behind them, and how others, of which the existence is not suspected, are suddenly mentioned by successive travellers."

The roads and gateways of this rugged land are the gorges leading through its jagged mountain chains, the most famous of them the gloomy Khyber Pass, opening above Peshawar, that has once and again been a highway of conquest. Its barren sides are garrisoned by wild Afridi tribesmen who hold it their birthright to take toll of unprotected travellers, but have a keen enough eye for business to accept payment from the British Government for keeping open the pass, while their fiercest spirits are being won to loyalty in the ranks of our native army. To Jamrud, at the mouth of the pass, the railway has been pushed on from Peshawar. Beyond, access has been jealously restricted by the Afghan Government; twice a week caravans traverse the pass, handed over from an Afghan to a British escort, or vice versa; but private adventurers are likely to get into trouble across the frontier, which is drawn 30 miles above Peshawar, the road so far being on neutral ground, under our control. By this road it is about 150 miles to Kabul, which may also be reached from India by the easier Kuram Pass to the south. Within the barrier pierced by the Khyber comes a slightly elevated plain, on an eminence of which stands Jelalabad, an old fortress town of two or three thousand people, where the Amir has a palace, at which to seek refuge



Burke Lahore

### Kabul: Tomb of Baber, grandson of Tamerlane

Baber (the "Tiger") was the founder of the Mogul dynasty. Driven by his enemies from Central Asia, he invaded and captured Kabul. Subsequently Baber entered India at the head of his army, made himself King of Delhi, and ultimately ruler of the whole of Northern India. He died in 1530.

from the severe winter of Kabul, as nearer it a summer retreat. Beyond there is more than one way through the mountains to the rich and populous plain stretching before the capital of Afghanistan.

Kabul, some 6000 feet above the sea, has a healthy climate, sharp in winter, but refreshed in summer by breezes from snow-clad mountains. The population is vaguely counted as more or less than 200,000, an attempt at a census having scared most of them into flight for fear of some ensnarement through coming under official notice. The city itself, built of mud-bricks and wood, is not very striking unless by its situation at the foot of ruggedly bold peaks and on the wooded banks of its river. Nor are its narrow streets, shut in by almost windowless walls, improved in picturesque-

ness by a partial adoption of European dress that was encouraged under Abdur Rahman, whose tomb is one of the most striking structures here. Some of the houses built since his reign gave security are more handsome and comfortable than the older dwellings, thus described by Dr. J. A. Gray, one of the European medical attendants brought here by this ruler, who suffered from gout like any alderman.

"Few of the streets, except the bazaars, can be called in any sense thoroughfares. They wind and twist about most irregularly, sometimes open to the sky, sometimes covered in by rooms belonging to the adjacent houses, and they usually end abruptly at the closed door of a house or garden. . . . You dismount at a door, and stumble into a dark winding passage with your head bent to avoid an



irregular beam, and you go slowly for fear of puddles and holes which you cannot see. You come into the open, and find yourself in a garden with flowers and trees, and a tank or pond in the middle, or in a small courtyard with simply a well. The house is built round the garden or yard, and consists of a series of rooms opening by doors into one another, and with the windows all looking into the garden."

On one of the background heights rise the walls and towers of the Bala Hissar, a citadel containing the Amir's ark or palace. On another is the gardened tomb of Tamerlane's grandson, Baber, the first Grand Mogul, who from Kabul set forth to a more brilliant seat in India. Outside the city also are the fortified cantonments in which more than once our troops, while dominating Kabul, have been practically besieged by swarms of hillmen. In the Bamian Pass through the mountains north of Kabul, near the ruined citadel of Gulguleh, a cliff has been excavated into hundreds of caves in irregular stories, among which the rock is sculptured with two gigantic figures, male and female, respectively 170 and 120 feet high, covered with a representation of thin drapery; a smaller effigy, about 80 feet, is understood to represent the child of these personages, dimly identified in an extinct race of sovereigns. Each of them stands cut out in a deep recess, which Vincent Eyre found painted with figures and emblematic devices. There are openings at the head and feet through which, by galleries and staircases cut in the rock, he ascended to the top of the female figure for a splendid view. These amazing images, much defaced by cannon shot, and apparently restored or repaired in part, must be of very ancient origin; they have been connected with vague memories of a city founded here by Alexander the Great. On a mountain crest to the other side of Kabul, Eyre describes also a Doric column, 70 feet high, known as Alexander's Pillar.

From Kabul it is more than 300 miles southwards to Kandahar. The road leads by Ghuzni, perched upon the mountains like an eagle's nest, from which swooped

forth Mahmud, the first Moslem conqueror of India. Once the capital of this region, it has now decayed to a place of 10,000 people or so. The old city lies in ruins, with the noble mosques, baths, bazaars, and palaces built by Mahmud, whose tomb has been preserved, but its famous gates, believed erroneously to be those of the temple of Somnath, were brought back to India among the few trophies of the first Afghan war. Other tombs of Moslem saints make this a place of pilgrimage, where Afghan hatred has keenly whetted itself against the invading infidel.

Kandahar, farther south and not so high above the sea as Kabul, has a warmer climate, sometimes made oppressive by continued dust-storms from the adjacent deserts. This also lies on a plain at the foot of striking heights, between two tributaries of the Helmand River. The old city was some little way off; the new one, built by Nadir Shah, is regularly divided into quarters, four streets leading to a central market-place in which are displayed the wares of East and West—cottons from Manchester, cutlery from Sheffield, silks from Bokhara, carpets from Persia, beside sheepskin cloaks, camel and horse harness, copper cooking-vessels, sweetmeats, flat wheaten cakes, kabobs frying on little charcoal stoves, and the fruits and vegetables that grow so luxuriantly in the environs. Silks and felts make the chief local manufacture. The principal buildings are the citadel and the tomb of Ahmad Shah, whose capital this was. It is now the second city of Afghanistan, and one of its chief seats of industry, but the population seems to be under 50,000. Hence a good road to India is by the Bolan Pass and the British station of Quetta, to and beyond which a railway has been made from the Indus, that may before long be pushed on to Kandahar.

From Kandahar, round the central mountain mass, goes a road to Herat, which lies due west of Kabul, but is not so easily accessible by more direct ways through wild passes and wild people, as poor M. Ferrier found when he tried to make this journey. The blooming valley of Herat, filled with

villages, gardens, and woods along the course of its river, hemmed in by sterile mountains, has been enthusiastically called the Garden and Granary of Asia; and the city itself is an important centre of trade, as the meeting-place of roads from Persia, Turkestan, and India. It is nearly a mile square within the fortifications so often demolished and rebuilt that their very wreck has formed an enormous mound, over which towers the dilapidated citadel. For miles outside the present enclosure extend the imposing ruins of Herat's former magnificence, when it was the seat of Hussein, a descendant of 'Timour, who in the end of the fifteenth century made himself renowned as a patron of science and art. It was then the chief market of this region; but its importance dwindled under the sufferings of attack from both sides—at one time conquered by Persia, at another plundered and oppressed by the ruthless Afghans. In 1837 it underwent the famous Persian siege, in which it held its independence; but under Dost Mahomed it became part of Afghanistan, though naturally belonging rather to the Khorassan province of Persia. It is believed to be coveted by Russia, which has a railway pushed up to Kushk, not far to the north of Herat. Of late its commerce seems to have revived, but the population is put at less than that of Kandahar.

The three provinces of these historic cities, Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, form what may be called Afghanistan Proper. Since this country became consolidated as something of a military power, it has taken to conquering like its great neighbours, always with a care not to poach on their preserves; and it now includes a northern dependency under the name of Afghan Turkestan, stretching from the Hindoo Koosh to the Oxus River. This is made up of several feeble khanates, inhabited mainly by Usbeg Tartars, who, despised and bullied by their

Afghan masters, in the barren mountains live by flocks, and cultivate richer ground on the often marshy river plains. In ancient times, when here flourished the Greek kingdom of Bactria, several noted towns stood on the roads from Afghanistan to Bokhara and Samarcand, but these have mostly fallen into decay. The principal one up to a generation ago was Balkh, "Mother of Cities", near which the ruins of the ancient metropolis, flourishing before Alexander's conquest, now cover the ground for miles. Balkh having been depopulated by cholera, the seat of government was moved a little way off to Mazar-i-Shercef, which, by last accounts, had some 25,000 people gathered round its famous Moslem shrine. This is centrally situated towards the northern border of the province. East of it the modern town of Tashkurgan has replaced Old Kulm on the Kulm River, by which there is a trade route from Kabul into Central Asia. West of Mazar, Andkhui, on the edge of the Merv deserts, is a considerable town though notoriously hot and unhealthy. South-westward, Maimana, at the junction of roads from Kabul and Herat, is said to be recovering its former prosperity, ruined by warfare and by raids of the Tekke Turcomans, through fear of whom large stretches of fertile land fell out of cultivation, where nothing but constant industry keeps the desert from sweeping in its tide of sand. Perhaps as having had to defend themselves against such inveterate foes, the people of Maimana seem to be more martial than their neighbours; and Abdur Rahman found them harder to subjugate. The eastern end of the province approaches the Pamirs by Badakshan, a mountainous region rich in minerals, notably rubies and the *lapis lazuli*, which latter stone is said to take its name from a district here.

On the southern side the desert border of Kandahar merges with Baluchistan along a recently better defined frontier line.

## BALUCHISTAN

Of this country, long commonly spelt Beloochistan, but transformed into Baluchistan by the Indian official spelling, little was known before its being taken under the charge of our Indian Empire. Its inhospitable soil and bloodthirsty people are not attractive to travellers, while its position makes it important on military considerations, as a forbidding barrier in whose wastes Alexander the Great left many of the soldiers he led back from the Indus. Rather more than half as large as all the Afghan territory, it has the same general characteristics, except as to a greater want of water. A larger part of the surface seems to be covered by sandy wastes, like that Seistan desert by which the north-west corner of this country merges with Afghanistan and Persia. The rest is raised in stony mountain ranges, which intercept the rain-clouds from the Arabian Sea. When they do not lose themselves in salt swamps, most of the few and unimportant river-courses, dry throughout a great part of the year, run to the south coast-land called Mekran, that puts in a claim to the distinction of having the hottest Asian climate. On this coast, it is said, for hundreds of miles only a single stunted tree appears as a landmark for sailors. The interior deserts are also a fearsome region, all the more so for their heat-radiating rocks and their loose sands constantly stirred up by the furnace winds of summer. In winter, on the mountains, the cold is often intense; and on the plains unlucky travellers may have snow, hail, and sand in turn blown into their faces by the icy blasts. Here and there are rich cultivated valleys, and gardens

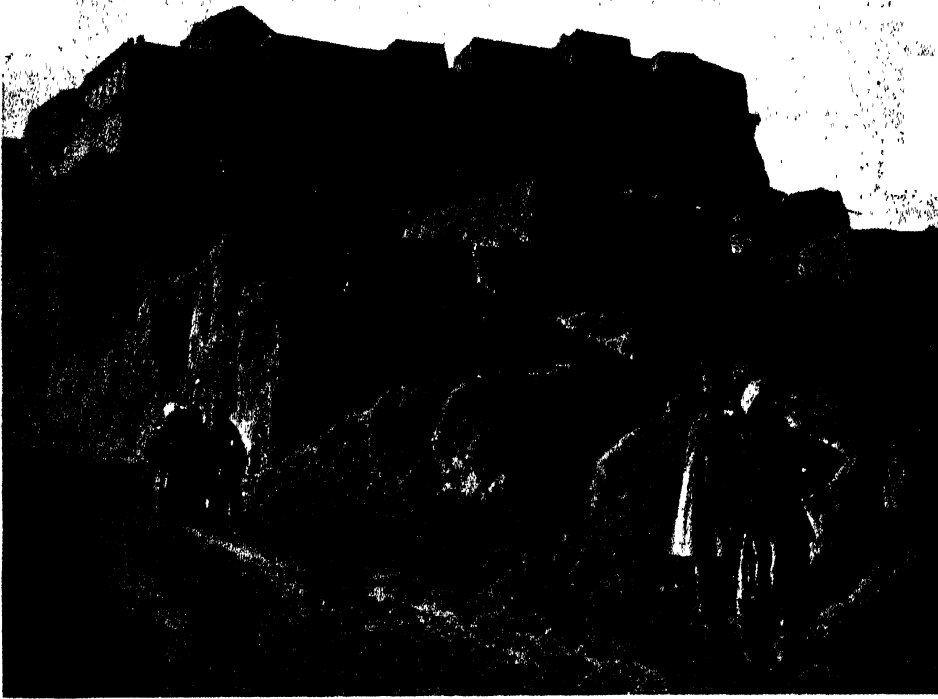
may be made to bloom "like a bunch of sweet-scented flowers in a fever ward"; but most of the inhabitants are a pastoral people, who readily turn their hands to fleecing their fellow-men, *marie aut arte*, neither fighting nor thieving coming amiss to them. The hardly explored mountains are believed to contain iron and copper; here and there they exhibit mud volcanoes and beds of sulphur that makes one of the few articles of commerce yielded by this poor land, whose productions differ little from those of Afghanistan. The date-palm appears in the south, where the Mekran coast of the Arabian Sea abounds in fish that are the chief food of its people.

The affix *istan*, so often met in this part of the world—of which a descendant is found in the latter syllables of *Britannia*—means country or region; and here its qualification seems unjustly come by. The oldest and most numerous inhabitants of Baluchistan are the Brahuis, a race of doubtful origin, perhaps Mongols, among whom have intruded the Baluchis, apparently akin to the Aryan Persians; and Pathans come over from the Afghan side. Some few hundred thousand in all, they live in unfriendly neighbourhood, admirable as hardy animals, but scarcely so in other respects. They are much alike in customs and want of manners, their religion being a coarse Mohammedanism, but the Baluchis derive from the Shiah sect predominant in Persia, while the Brahuis are Sunnites, which helps to keep them apart. Where life and property are fairly safe, Hindus drift into the country to carry on business.<sup>1</sup>

Country is hardly the name for this home

<sup>1</sup> "The Beloochees are ardent, impulsive, well-formed, and nervous; their complexion is olive, like that of the Arab, and these two races have more than one analogous point between them. Their features express astuteness and ferocity, they are insensible to privations, and support them and fatigue in the most admirable manner; no matter how painful and long the journey may be, they are always ready for the march. A Persian and Afghan travel at night to avoid the great heats; the Beloochee,

on the contrary, is not only not afraid of them, but seeks that which these nations as much as possible avoid; they march only between sunrise and sunset, and before or after will never move a yard; if the great luminary disappears before they have arrived at their intended halt, they encamp on the spot they happen to be at the time. Their most extraordinary physical characteristic is the facility with which, camel-like, they can for so long a time go without drink in their burning country—a draught



Kelat : where the citadel of the Khan dominates the town

of quarrelsome, fierce, and semi-independent tribes, among whom even villages are rare. The largest group more or less willingly recognizes the supremacy of the Khan of Kelat, a town with some thousands of people, whose mud houses rise in terraces up to its towering citadel, perched loftily in the mountainous north-west country, where its lord has a winter residence at the less ungenial Gundava, not far away. This prince has been fain to submit himself to Britain, that outside such protected territory controls the wild tribesmen from

remote agency stations, while the north-west corner is formally annexed to the Indian Empire. Here a looped line from Scinde reaches our important military station Quetta, guarding the southern pass into Afghanistan; and from it the long Khojak tunnel carries a railway on to the edge of the Kandahar plain, over which it could soon be extended. A branch line penetrates Baluchistan beyond Nushki, on a northern caravan route to Seistan. Other rails are being laid, perhaps rather on military than commercial considerations; and

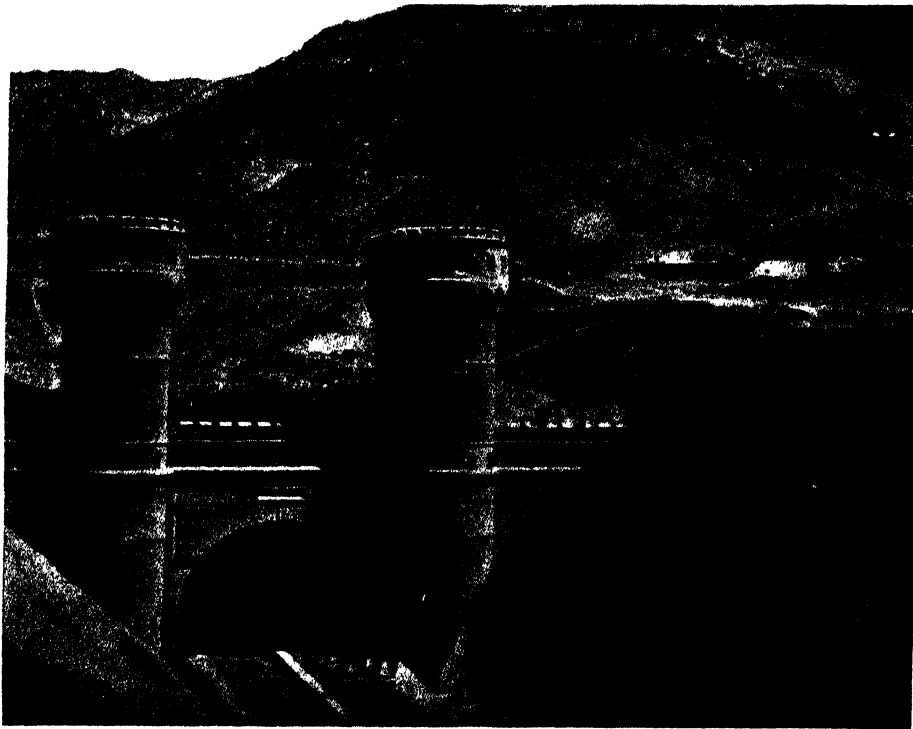
of water once in the twenty-four hours is sufficient for them, even on a journey; they have also a particular instinct for ascertaining the spot at which water is nearest the surface of the soil, and they rarely dig farther than three feet without coming to it. . . . When their opportunity for pillage arrives their activity is amazing, their plans are undertaken and executed with great promptitude and courage, and wonderful address; life is as nothing to them, and they will expose it for the least trifle. They know so thoroughly how strong is their predilection

for thieving, how inveterate the habit, that two friends, two brothers, ay, even a father and a son travelling together, will take good care not to sleep close to one another. When the time for rest arrives, one will point out to the other a spot one hundred yards off where he had better sleep, and they both swear by Peer-kisri not to approach each other until the hour of departure. They have a remarkably quick sense of hearing, and the least noise or movement made by one will be sure to awake the other."—Ferrier's *Caravan Journeys*.

telegraph wires run across the desert from Quetta to the Persian border.

The only other places that can be called towns are Kej or Kulatak in the south-west corner, and Bela in the south-east, near which a remarkable ravine has been excavated by many hundreds of cave dwellings recalling those seen in the Mexican region of America. The Jam of Bela is another small potentate who has accepted British over-lordship. To the south a gathering of mud huts in Sonmiani Bay is the chief landing-place on the coast "wilderness of rock and scrub". Mr. De Windt, when he took an adventurous ride hence to Kelat, over some 400 miles of sand plains and slippery ridges bristling with needle-like points, tells us that on the tracks

that serve for roads he passed through only half a dozen places worth calling villages, besides Bela and Kelat, and, except their scowling inhabitants, fell in with a dozen human beings at the most. On the west side these sparsely settled tribes extend into wilds where Sir A. H. MacMahon, who, in 1896, drew a boundary line between Afghanistan and Baluchistan, was more recently engaged in settling a frontier on the Persian side. This country seems so little worth quarrelling about, that a native proverb declares: "When God created the world, Baluchistan was made out of the refuse"; yet on the edge of Persia stand the ruins of fortifications, even of cities, one stretching for miles, that tell of a palmier past.



Underwood & Underwood

The Khojak Tunnel, near Quetta, the important British military station

This tunnel, which is 3 miles long, carries the railway to the edge of the Kandahar plain. By its means troops could be poured into either Baluchistan or Afghanistan at a moment's notice.

# ~~THE BRITISH INDIAN EMPIRE~~

## ~~HINDOSTAN~~

From the earliest dawn of history India has been a mistily famous land. In the Middle Ages exaggerated reports of its pomps and wonders excited the imagination and the enterprise of Europe. In our day, when its true condition is still too little known to Europe, there are few Englishmen who have not some vague idea of the picturesque features brocaded together in one of Macaulay's most purple passages:

"The burning sun, the strange vegetation of the palm and cocoa tree, the rice-field, the tank; the huge trees, older than the Mongol empire, under which the village crowds assemble; the thatched roof of the peasant's hut, and the rich tracery of the mosque, where the imaum prayed with his face to Mecca; the drums, and banners, and gaudy idols; the devotees swinging in the air; the graceful maiden, with the pitcher on her head, descending the steps to the river-side; the black faces, the long beards, the yellow streaks of sect; the turbans and the flowing robes; the spears and the silver maces; the elephants with their canopies of state; the gorgeous palanquin of the prince and the close litter of the noble lady, from the halls where suitors laid gold and perfumes at the feet of sovereigns to the wild moor where the gipsy camp was pitched."

This kite-shaped promontory of Central Asia is cut off from the rest of the world by natural barriers, its coast-line of between 3000 and 4000 miles being hardly a more

confining limit than the huge mountain wall of the Himalayas, "Abode of Snow", the loftiest section of that stony "Girdle of the Earth" that may be traced across two continents from ocean to ocean. For 1500 miles, with an average breadth of some 200, this range bends round Northern India, broken by snowy passes and the rocky gorges of its chief rivers, which pour down from countless summits loftier than any mountain of Europe. There have been counted some half-hundred peaks over 24,000 feet, the highest of them, so far as is ascertained, being Mount Everest (29,000 feet), while it is possible that a higher point may yet be measured among the labyrinth of ridges behind, bordering the lofty Tibetan plateaux. In the Karakoram range, on the Turkestan edge, is one point (28,278 feet) only a few hundred feet short of Mount Everest; this long had no other name on maps than "K. 2", but now takes the name of its explorer, Colonel Godwin-Austen.<sup>1</sup>

The snow-line, twice as high as on the Alps, varies here, according to the exposure, from 16,000 to 20,000 feet, unexpectedly proving to be lower on the southern than on the drier and more sheltered northern side; but many of the tops shine out through the clouds clad in eternal white, dimly visible hundreds of miles away across the sultry plain below. Among them wind glaciers, forty or fifty miles long, fed by

<sup>1</sup> In these pages is mainly kept the spelling of names long familiar to English eyes; but our section maps will usually show the official spelling introduced by Sir W. W. Hunter, which is not always used consistently, such names as *Lucknow* and *Cawnpore* having become household words in the old

form. In some cases it has seemed well to give the official form in brackets after the other. Readers will note the interchangeableness of *a* and *u* in Hindustani, and such alternative forms as *pur* and *pore* in the affix denoting a city. The medley of tongues must also be remembered.

vast beds of *névé*, and often almost buried beneath the fragments of the splintered peaks above; huge avalanches thunder through the roars of the storm; *aiguilles*, *moraines*, *couloirs*, and all the familiar features of Alpine scenery are repeated on a vaster scale, in more appalling aspects of rugged barrenness seldom seen close at hand by eyes which can make the comparison. The valleys are thinly peopled by shy clans, their fastnesses and tiny oases exposed to destruction by avalanches and floods, as well as by hostile raids. One of them, the Hunzas, boast a legendary belief in their descent from Alexander the Great's soldiery, who may have been left scattered as deserters or garrisons of those inhospitable altitudes.

Some accounts of wandering adventure here, if not mere travellers' tales, want the credit of accurate observation and measurement. Several recent climbers have authentically got up to nearly 25,000 feet, surpassing what was once the record of 23,000 feet, won by Sir Martin Conway on Pioneer Peak in the Karakoram, to see "ridge behind ridge, peak behind peak, higher and higher, tier above tier, with ribs of rock and crests of snow, and deep-lying valleys of ice-bound splendour, till the eye, bewildered by so much magnificence, ceased attempting to unravel the mountain maze, and was content to rest upon the whole as an impression, single and complete". None of our explorers had even approached the monarch of these mountains, nor was it ascertained whether Mount Everest stood on Nepaulese or Tibetan territory, when, in 1921, the Royal Geographical Society and the Alpine Club organized jointly an expedition to lay siege to it with, let us hope, better fortune than befell Mummery's party, lost in his gallant attempt on Nanga Parbat, that, beside the Indus, looks down into what is thought to be the deepest gorge in our world. Backed by the Indian Government, and well equipped both with science- and mountain-craft, this new expedition should add largely to our knowledge of the Himalayan region.

Among those snow-crested waves of frozen

land, extending over a region larger than France and Germany, can be distinguished two main parallel ridges, behind which again is the Karakoram or Mustagh chain, these names properly belonging to passes in the unexplored mountains stretching along the Tibetan plateaux. The southern ranges trending northward at their west end, the whole three chains, with others traversing the northward region, bunch themselves together in the Hindoo Koosh, beside the great Pamirs which make the centre of Asia. From the labyrinth of mountains that here spread over Afghanistan, the Suliman range runs south, shaping the course of the Indus; and the other side of North India is likewise curtailed off by the hills of Assam and Burma, bending round from the little-explored eastern end of the Himalayas. It is in its central stretch that the main range stands up as a wall above the plain of the Ganges. Below it, like a moat, lies a broad strip of malarious marsh and jungle called the Terai, bordered on the mountain side by forest slopes of the robust sal tree, flourishing among a thick undergrowth of shrubs and creepers; beyond which again, at the very foot of the great mountains, deep trough-like *doons* may mark the beds of dried-up lakes, sometimes choked with rank jungle, but sometimes wholesomely verdured like a rich park. The Terai, an Irish bog overgrown by tropical rankness, is a most unhealthy region, seldom visited by Europeans unless in search of game; and it is said that not even wild animals can live through the hot weather in some of its suffocating recesses, yet it has a breed of natives that seem immune to its poison. The name of Terai-hat, given to the thickest of those helmets with which Anglo-Indians protect their heads against the sun, is a hint of the reputation borne by this district. On the west side, the swamps and thickets of the Terai become replaced by stretches of grass-grown sand.

Beyond this waste belt, southward, comes the great plain of dust and verdure, where one might travel for days without seeing a hillock, sometimes hardly a stone, an expanse as large as a European kingdom, upon



Johnston &amp; Hoffman

### Bathing in the Sacred River Ganges

Of all the great rivers of India none can compare in sanctity with "Mother Ganga", and veneration for the Ganges still figures as a chief article in the creed of modern Hinduism

which is crowded more than half the population of India. This plain, basin of the two chief river systems that have washed its soil down from the mountains, is Hindostan Proper. The richer, larger, and the more populous part is on the eastern side, watered by the Ganges with its tributaries, that, though not the largest, has become the most famed of Indian rivers, giving life in this world, if not in the next as they believe, to over a hundred million souls.

The sacred Ganges, rising in a Himalayan glacier, has a course of about 1500 miles, for the greater part navigable, its countless feeders interwoven with a network of canals, whose maintenance and

extension are among the most beneficial achievements of our rule. After taking in, at Allahabad, the Jumna on the right bank, then on the other side the Gumti and the Gogra in Oudh, joined again by the Son from the central highlands, it flows through the rich plains and rice-fields of Bengal, still swollen by tributaries larger than any English river, itself at least a mile in breadth for hundreds of miles, and flooding into broad reaches where the opposite shore is lost to the eye. As it approaches the sea it is joined by the Brahmaputra, a larger and longer river, which, rising behind the southern Himalaya chain, and—there under the name of Sangpo, "the holy river"—



running eastward for hundreds of untraced miles in Tibet, falling thousands of feet in a long chain of cataracts or rapids, has doubled back and broken through the mountain wall to take a south-westerly course, then drains the watery province of Assam. Neither of these great rivers can be said to swallow up the other, as they flow together into the Bay of Bengal by countless shifting channels, meandering through the Sunderbunds, a maze of marshy islands overgrown with dense jungle, inhabitable only by wild creatures, and opening over a delta some hundred miles broad. At the eastern end of this delta what may be called the main stream of the Brahmaputra unites with the Megna to form an estuary 60 miles broad at its mouth; at the western end comes the Hoogly, the chief navigable channel, on which Calcutta stands. The countless branches are interlaced over a space of 32,000 square miles of watery soil, all washed down by the rivers that still go on shoaling up this "amphibious wilderness" with their turbid burden of silt from the mountains, which they can no longer sweep onwards, yet by its offscourings the sea outside is discoloured for a score of leagues.

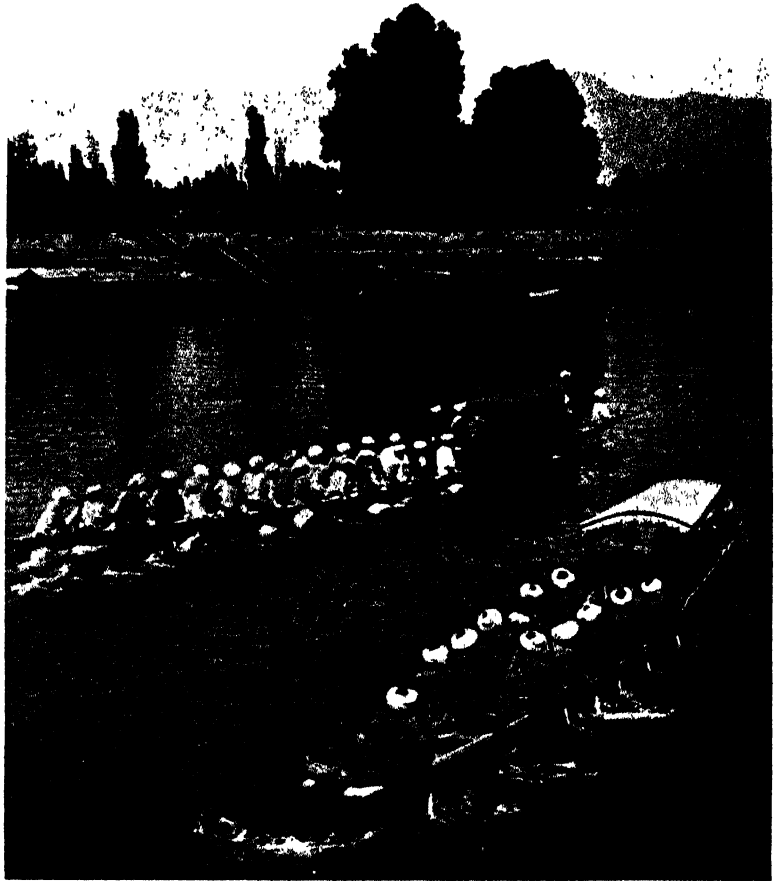
The Indus, which, as first known to Europeans, has christened India, is its longest river, with a stream of nearly 2000 miles. It also rises behind the southern chain, not far from the head-waters of the Brahmaputra, then, joined by the Shayok from heights farther north, it flows north-westward, from oasis to oasis, through the stony steeps of Tibet and Baltistan, before turning south to break through the Himalayan gorges, where for a time it almost vanishes from our knowledge among the fastnesses of wild hill tribes. Swollen by the Kabul River and many another rushing stream, it descends upon the Punjab, along the base of the lofty Suliman Mountains. The Punjab, as is well known, gets its name from "The Five Rivers", spread over it like a fan, the chief of them the Sutlej, which, rising not far from the Indus, below those snowy Kailas peaks that are the Hindu Olympus, seat of cloudy gods, comes to swallow up the other Punjab rivers, and

double the volume of the main stream, before this receives from the opposite side the scanty mountain waters of Baluchistan. "Seven Rivers" was the ancient name of this region, a hint how at least one stream may have disappeared in its thirsty sands. For the basin of the Indus is far less fertile than that of the Ganges, its huge current running more to waste in a thankless soil, the broken elevation of which in some parts makes canalization less easy; but towards its mouth it can be distributed more widely through its own alluvial deposits. Upon the shifting main stream large cities are rare; in dry weather its dwindling channels become choked by sand-banks that impede navigation, while in the wet season the suddenly-swollen tributaries may cause disastrous floods over miles of country. The "Doabs" between its Punjab branches remain often mere deserts, when our engineers have not been able to store and distribute a naturally irregular supply. By such needy borders a great part of the Indus water is sucked away before it pours into the Arabian Sea through a sand-choked and reed-grown delta where a canal and harbour works have opened the prosperous port and railway terminus of Kurrachee.

North and south of the Punjab two very different regions illustrate the variety of nature in India. To the north the spreading mountains enclose Cashmere (Kashmir), ruled by a maharajah of Sikh race under the helpful care of our Government. His dominion itself has a double character. Beyond the Himalayas it comprises, with other mountainous provinces, the stony Tibetan state Ladak, whose capital Leh is 11,500 feet above the sea, and some parts about the valley of the Indus are cultivated to thousands of feet higher. The southern portion is the famous Vale of Cashmere, once the bed of a great lake, fragments of which still dot the plain, and through it winds the River Jehlam, "famed Hydaspes" of the ancients. Shut in by snowy peaks, dark forests, and distant glacier beds, this oval valley, about 200 miles round and 5000 to 6000 feet high, has a sub-alpine climate that may well make it seem a paradise to

its shivering or sweltering neighbours; and loudly have the beauties of its temperate summer been sung by Eastern poets as at second-hand by Thomas Moore. Travellers grow enthusiastic over its green fields and groves, its slopes of flowery grass, its very wastes covered with blue iris so that the ground seems to reflect the sky; the blossoms of hawthorn, horse-chestnuts, and wild strawberries delighting eyes fresh from the dusty plains; the snug villages embowered among woods of fruit-trees, hung about with creeping vines, and alive with brightly-plumaged birds; the floating islands of vegetation on its waterways; the profusion of roses and other flowers by which even the roofs are turned into gardens.

Well might the Moguls lay out for themselves imperial paradises near the chief town, Srinagar, a place of 120,000 people, that has been called "Venice translated into wood", from the river and its canals being thickly bordered by ancient palaces, temples, and carved dwellings about its towering citadel. But in its narrow thoroughfares this comparison seems a less apt one to the eye than to the nose. A better name for one suburban quarter would be the Henley of India, the river bank being here lined with house-boats, bungalows, and tents "whose occupants are men in flannels and girls in



Underwood & Underwood  
State Barges of H.H. the Maharajah on the Jhelum River at  
Srinagar, Cashmere

Thames-side summer dresses". For Cashmere has become a holiday haunt of Anglo-Indians, hundreds of whom come every season to bask in its sunny vale, or to penetrate its hills in search of game that abounds in the wild black gorges more characteristic of Himalayan scenery than is this rare instance of a rich, open vale.

To the "Switzerland of India" a strong contrast is found on the south of the Punjab, where, between the course of the Indus through Scinde and the low rocky

chain of the Aravalli Hills separating its basin from that of the Ganges, extends the Thar or Great Indian Desert, that on a smaller scale has the redoubtable characteristics of the Sahara, without its oases. This is a sea of low sand ridges, broken by salt ponds and crusts, among which stunted trees or scrubby bushes, hardly affording pasture to camels, seem rarer than the bones of men and animals that have perished in trying to push from one well to another, perhaps against a burning wind driving before it clouds of scorching, stinging grit sometimes so thick as to form a sickly fog, through which the pitiless sun glares like a ball of red-hot copper. Rain may not fall here for years together, then it comes in torrents, for a time drowning the hollows in quickly parched verdure. To the south of this again lies a singular region, the Runn of Cutch, marked on maps as an inland sea, but in dry weather it is a flat plain, frosted over with efflorescences, or dappled with sheets of brine that yield its harvest of salt; then under the rains, or when south-west winds drive a flood of sea-water up its narrow opening, the whole expanse becomes covered by water so shallow that camels can plash their way between its marshy islands. This seems to mark an upheaval of the coast about the Indus delta, whose channels must have shifted to the west of their former course, where now on dry land are found the pierced stones that once made primitive anchors.

A slight subsidence of the alluvial plain would turn the southern half of India into an island. Beyond the great river basins come higher plains and forests rising to the parallel ridges of the Vindhya and Satpura Mountains, which, though they have a height of several thousand feet, make no imposing show above the general elevation of the land. These heights, crossing the western half of the peninsula and throwing out a spur to the Ganges, form a barrier between Hindostan Proper and the tongue-like promontory of the Deccan, almost another country in its conformation, scenery, and inhabitants. The centre of the Deccan is a mass of bare, rolling plains and table-

lands, 2000 to 3000 feet high, seamed by low volcanic ridges and deep watercourses, dotted with lakes, natural and artificial, shut in on either side by the ranges of the Ghauts, outside of which the coast is bordered by low plains. The terraced Ghauts, a name aptly derived from their resemblance to gigantic steps, rise on the western side to about 5000 feet, and like the Himalayas, on a smaller scale, present most wildly picturesque scenery as in sheer cliffs and thickly-wooded gorges they fall towards the Konkan, the level shore-strip of Bombay. On the eastern side they are so much lower and less grandly broken as hardly to deserve the name of a mountain ridge, forming rather the edge of the highland that here slopes more gradually towards the sea. To the south of Mysore these ridges knot themselves together in the airy Neilgherry (Nilgiri) Hills or Blue Mountains, whose highest point is 8760 feet. A great expanse of land is here covered by converging mountains; then comes a narrow but deep gap, beyond which the Cardamom range, with its highest elevation (nearly 9000 feet) in the Anamalai Hills, runs down the point of the peninsula, between the coast of Travancore and the broader plains of the Carnatic to Cape Comorin. The shore of the promontory on the east side is known as the Coromandel (Karimanal) coast, on the west side as the Malabar coast.

The rivers of the Deccan, as might be expected from its conformation, are mostly too short, rapid, irregular in their flow, and interrupted in their course, to be of much use for navigation, especially on the mountainous western coast; nor can they easily be bridled for irrigation. Three, however, have a length of 800 to 900 miles, and enjoy the reputation of sanctity which in this climate naturally attaches itself to a volume of life-giving water. This is specially the case with the Nerbudda (Narbada), the Ganges of southern India, that between the Vindhya and Satpura ranges flows westward into the Gulf of Cambay, passing amidst magnificent scenery in its upper course, where, near Jubbulpore, it falls through a narrow gorge of marble



The Mighty Himalayas: Mount Kinchinjunga from the north

rocks, crowned by one of the most beautiful and sacred of Hindu temples that, to European hunters after the picturesque as well as to native devotees, has become a place of pilgrimage. The Tapi is a shorter stream draining the same side to the south of the Satpura Mountains. On the opposite coast the chief rivers are the Godavari and the Kistna or Krishna, sweeping down the detritus of the Deccan highlands to form an advancing coast-line about their deltas. South of these the smaller Cauvery rushes from the highlands of Mysore by temples that attest its repute for sanctity equal, in local estimation, to that of the Ganges.

Besides Ceylon, which must be treated separately, the Indian peninsula has several groups of island dependencies. Off the Malabar coast lie the Laccadive or "Hundred Thousand" Islands, so called as including the countless Maldive group, 200 miles to the south, both of coral formation, their countless reefs and palm-shaded lagoons peopled by a Malay race. The latter are politically connected with Ceylon. On the other side, far across the Bay of Bengal, and belonging rather to the Malay Peninsula, are the Nicobar Islands, continued to the north by the larger volcanic chain of the Andamans, muggy and malarious home of an expiring black race, so stunted in mind as in body as to be accused by their neighbours of being descended from monkeys. Port Blair, in the south of this group, has been used as the Botany Bay of India, and seems well fit for a penal settlement, lately abandoned.

This vast country, possessing "every variety of scenery, from peaks of ice to reefs of coral, from treeless burning plains to thick tangled jungle and almost impenetrable forests", has in its uneven surface, as in its very size, cause for diversity of climate; but its general characteristic, even among the snow-topped crags of the Himalayas, is a fierce sun-heat at all seasons trying and, without caution, dangerous to Europeans. In Australia and in the Sahara, where as high temperature may be often braved, one does not suffer so much from the rays that here soon teach rashness or

inexperience the need of thick head-gear affected both by white men and natives in the East. After one "touch of the sun", no stranger will venture to trifle with a glow that for the hottest hours of the day counsels shelter to those not inured to it from birth. In the so-called "cold weather", especially in northern India, as, of course, on the hills, ice may form at night; but the mid-day sun seldom invites to exercise, so that all residents get into the way of early rising to make the most of the morning freshness, and prolong their sunset airing into the quickly-gathering dusk. The dry heat of the uplands, though greater, is more bearable by most Europeans than the hot-house air of the coast, where in the south at least there is little change of temperature all the year round beyond that brought by the alternation of land and sea breezes. The "hot weather", that seems not to deserve the name of our friendly summer, kindles a furnace of heat, in which an Englishman is fain to shut out every ray of light from his abode, the fierce breath of noon admitted only through blinds of wetted grass and kept in motion by the swinging of punkas—now often replaced by electric fans—when no cooling devices or too-tempting drinks can avail to make life seem endurable by scorching day or stifling night.

More important here than the change between the hot and the cooler season is that of the rains, which makes the momentous feature in an Indian summer. We in England, so apt to grumble over our uncertain climate, would know how much we have to be thankful for after a little experience of Oriental monotony. "Another fine day!" sounds such a mockery to those who have learned to look on the sun as a foe rather than a friend, and to hail as angels' visits the dust-storms that may spring up in spring, followed by refreshing "mango showers". But these "little rains" are partial and uncertain; and the sweet season that inspires Western poets is here apt to be a time of intense trial to man and beast. All nature seems to wither, save where patches of green are watered by constant

labour. Sometimes, too, one sees on the Indian plains how large trees, sending their roots deep down into water below, grow fresh with leaves and blossoms, while the dusty ground is strewn with dead leaves among its tufts of bleached grass. But in general the blasting sun plays the tyrant over animal and vegetable life, till the world grows a vast Black Hole, in which one can hardly breathe, and the "scorched darkness" brings no rest, and the soil of baked mud cracks as if gasping for air. "With what mind then must home-sick exiles read our poets' praises of May and June?"

At last, when endurance is almost spent, comes the blessed relief of the monsoon, bursting on the coast from the south, sweeping towards the mountains its burden of rain stored up from the barren ocean. The monsoon's arrival, early in June, presents from the Ghauts above Bombay a grand spectacle thus described by M. Reclus.

"On one side of the horizon the copper-coloured vapours mass themselves into towers, are grouped like 'elephants' to use the local phrase, then slowly advance landwards; the cloud deepens, it covers half the sky, while the blue of the other half is unflecked. On one side darkness soon wraps mountain and valley, but far off the outline of the shore stands out with marvellous sharpness, the sea and the rivers glitter like slabs of steel; the fields, the scattered towns, seem to shine with supernatural glare. The thunder begins to growl, the clouds dash against the scarps of the Ghauts, and the tempest breaks forth, flashes following each other continuously; the air filled with ceaseless peals; the rain coming down in torrents. Then there is a rent in the thick gloom, clear shining comes gradually back, and of all these crumpling skyey masses there remain only light mists creeping up the valleys or curling about the tree-tops. Such is usually the first burst of the monsoon, ushering in the regular rains; but the rain-clouds sometimes arrive unattended by thunder; darkness suddenly fills the air and the downfall begins. Sometimes for a day or two the clouds skirt along the promontories, like ships of war passing round a fortress; as it doubles the point, each cloud discharges its volley, as if the sky were at war with the mountains."

For the next quarter of the year "the rains" are the prevailing character of the season, breaks in them making a time of muggy, steamy damp as trying to health as the heat. This is the south-western monsoon that comes in summer. Later on, the north-eastern monsoon brings welcome watering, but chiefly on the Madras side. The quantity of the rainfall varies in different parts. On the Ghauts, that take heaviest toll from the ocean currents, it is said to amount sometimes to nearly 300 inches in the year, as at Mahabaleshwar, the hill station of Bombay, where the very tombstones in the churchyard are thatched in to prevent them being washed away. But above the Gulf of Assam the fall is twice as great; this, indeed, is believed to be the wettest corner of the globe, in one very rainy year about 800 inches having been counted as against our annual dribble of some score inches in Norfolk, doubled or quadrupled on the west side of England. Among unknown Himalayan wildernesses the rain-storms can be gauged only by the erosive force with which watery avalanches have carved the peaks and crests into extraordinary similitudes of the ruins of human handiwork, above dark gorges hollowed out by torrents so abruptly that their slopes scarce afford a yard of level ground. On the Indian plains 40 or 50 inches may be taken as an average supply. In Scinde it is estimated as under 10 inches. In this region the clouds sweep aside, leaving unrefreshed the deserts about the Indus. Here as elsewhere over India, our Government has done much to correct the shortcomings of nature, by irrigating canals, dams, and "tanks", these last often spacious lakes, which dot the country by tens of thousands. The notable Periyar dam of Travancore impounds a river once running to waste in the western sea, now carried back by a tunnel through the Ghauts to water their dry eastern side.

When the rain does come it amply makes up for that long spell of drought. The rivers, on whose banks one may see the fragments of wrecked craft caught among boulders high above their trickling current,

once more rise in rushing flood, here and there spreading out into lakes. Many parts of the lowlands are swamped; the peasant must paddle to his field; villages stand up like islands and tree-tops like beacons in a far-spreading inundation that will drive their inhabitants for refuge to farther heights. But when the deluge subsides the land is quickly drowned afresh in green, and now appears cause for the sacredness of water in this thirsty land, where almost every confluence of the Ganges is a place of pilgrimage, and on its banks are clustered whole cities of holy shrines. Man has done his part to share out the benefits of nature. Canals, aqueducts, ditches, and smaller conduits carry off the overflow of the brimming rivers. Huge tanks store up the supply, or deep wells, from which skins and buckets are hoisted by a bamboo crane or by creaking windlasses turned by patient bullocks. Beside wells and fountains, or by the banks of pond or stream, every morning the Hindu will be found religiously washing himself in public, as a practical act of thanksgiving to the powers that send this blessed element from heaven.

Sometimes the floods are calamitous. Sir W. W. Hunter describes one in Orissa that covered nearly 300 square miles for weeks with several feet of water.

"The rivers came down like furious bulls, bursting their banks in every direction. More than 412,000 people were suddenly driven out of house and home, and found themselves in the middle of a boiling ocean. Thousands of miserable families floated about in canoes, on bamboo rafts, on trunks of trees, or on rice sacks, which threatened every moment to dissolve into fragments beneath them. Every banyan tree had its rookery of human beings, while the Brahmans from the roofs of their

brick temples looked down in safety as the flood roared past. The common danger disarmed all creatures of their natural antipathies. Snakes glided up to the roofs and burrowed harmlessly in the thatch. Sheep and goats were carried away by herds in the torrent, and in a few days their carcasses came to the surface and floated about covered with crows and kites. But the most pitiable sight of all was the plough-cattle, standing in shallow parts up to their necks, and hungrily snuffing the barren waters for food, until they sank exhausted into the slime."

In this region, where all seems to be on a gigantic scale, terrible cyclones also work far-spread havoc, and can destroy tens of thousands of lives in a day. But the most familiar and the most fearful calamity is when over large districts the rain-clouds may float by as in pitiless mockery, or give a grudging discharge short of the needed relief. That means warning of far-spread death. Water inevitably runs short; the land is scorched up, the crops fail, and myriads or millions of impoverished peasants will be blighted into gaunt shapes of hunger and disease. The great famine of 1877-8 is calculated to have cost over five million lives. Under the old native Governments these victims were left to die like flies, struggling feebly among each other for the scanty means of subsistence. And now, when the resources of an enlightened Government are brought into play for humane relief, not all the doles of charity from the other side of the world, all the improved means of communication, nor all the strenuous labours of our overtasked officials can always do more than mitigate the unspeakable sufferings of ever-recurring famines, followed by the pestilential diseases that are epidemic in India.

## INHABITANTS OF INDIA

This rich land has all along invited conquest, even before the days of classical warriors who, in the twilight of history, are seen flitting across its mountain barrier. In the central hills still exist aboriginal black tribes whose very names, meaning *slaves* or *labourers*, denote how they have been driven here by encroaching superiors; some of these are so low in the scale of life that till last century they offered human sacrifices, fought with flint arrows, and clothed themselves with leaves, like Adam. In the north, under the Himalayas, there is a strong strain of Mongoloid blood. At the southern end the people mainly belong to a stock called Dravidian, which, with its variety of allied languages, Telugu and Tamil the most widely spoken, seems to represent a wave of invasion earlier than that which came to overflow the main part of the peninsula. At least three thousand years ago we find dominant on the Indus and the Ganges a fair-skinned Aryan people, akin to ourselves, now represented by the pure-blooded Brahmans and Rajputs, while their blending with lower stocks has produced the masses of the brown Hindu population in various shades, sometimes differing as widely as nations of Europe from each other. In the north-west are the manly Sikhs and the hardy Jats, of whom a wandering shoot is recognized by some ethnologists in our familiar gipsies, popularly identified with Egypt. On the other side of India swarm the millions of Bengal, who, as Macaulay puts it, "enervated by a soft climate and accustomed to peaceful employments, bore the same relation to other Asiatics which the Asiatics generally bear to the bold and energetic children of Europe". This weak-kneed character has come to mark the typical Hindu; and that his degeneration is of old date appears from the persistency with which Tartars, Arabs, Turcomans, Afghans, and other warlike races were able to swoop down upon the fruits of his patient industry.

For centuries India was overrun by streams of Moslem invasion, depositing a new stratum of flesh and blood in many parts, among a great majority of Hindus. The Moslem warriors in turn grew languid under Indian suns; and the Mogul empire was hardly established in all its stateliness when it began to go to pieces, frittered away among self-seeking viceroys and assailed by a revival of Hindu vigour in the Mahratta hill-tribes, who carried their devastating excursions to the walls of Delhi and Calcutta. By this time India was being intruded on by sea as well as through the Himalayan passes; and more than one European nation sought to win a share of its wealth, at first in the way of trade rather than of war. Amid the ruins of the Mogul empire grew up, for a time unnoticed, the power of a great trading company which, by the feeble tyranny of native princes, was half-forced, half-tempted into a career of conquest, at first provoked by the rivalry of France. A century completed that conquest, for a moment endangered by the crisis of the Mutiny, then the joint-stock master, "John Company", whose very name and nature made such an imposing mystery to its millions of subjects, handed over India to be the brightest jewel in the British Crown.

This latest conquest differs from former ones in that the dominant race show little desire to settle for life in the uncongenial country they govern, while to its mingled population they have added a new strain in the multiplying half-castes who usually aspire to follow European customs, as is natural where European birth makes a title to aristocracy. It must be confessed that this stock, having its root in our vices, does not bear a rich crop of our characteristic virtues; but to the rule there are exceptions. The half-bred people, best known as Eurasian, now demand to be styled "Anglo-Indian", a name hitherto reserved by the class of pure "sahibs", so this pretension





Underwood &amp; Underwood

Parsees worshipping the New Moon on the Beach at Bombay

Parsees form a large, intelligent, and exceptionally prosperous part of the population of Bombay, where their snow-white garments and black brimless hats are familiar features. The building in the background is the Church Gate Station of the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway.

raises a difficulty in distinguishing the latter.

Among the elements that go to make up India's three hundred millions, special mention should be made of the Parsees, a small but important constituent. Descendants of Persian fire-worshippers, exiled from their native land and admitted in India to the hospitality of fresh persecution and abasement through which they held together for centuries, thriving by their turn for commerce, under British protection they have developed into a singularly enterprising and industrious community with its centre at

Bombay, where their high, black hats and snow-white garments are so often seen, notably on the shore when at early morning they pay their hereditary devotions to the rising sun. Here one can hardly believe that the Parsees are only about a hundred thousand strong; but all over India, especially on the western side, will they be found prospering, and in the ports of Eastern seas, seldom in servile positions, rather as bankers, shopkeepers, and men of business. The rising generation, sometimes educated in England, take kindly to our athletic sports,

and cricket has become a favourite game. The better position of women among them makes social intercourse with Europeans possible, as it is not in the case of Moslem and Hindu *purdah* ladies. The higher class of Parsees begin to hold somewhat lightly to the religion of Zoroaster, which readily adapts itself to liberal conceptions, while its strict observances centre round a veneration for fire so regardful that the orthodox Parsee scruples to smoke as a trifling with his sacred element. This reverence having forbidden them to use cremation, like the Hindus, their most striking custom is that of laying the dead on the top of high towers at sunrise and sunset, to be devoured by the vultures that, perched in a hideous row, await their daily meal about those "Towers of Silence", standing in leafy gardens outside cities of western India. Enlightened Parsees now incline to give up this insanitary practice.

The Parsees are, in India, much what the Jews are or were in other countries. Here, too, Jews have made their way in small numbers. A small sect of Syrian Christians also has long been settled on the south coast. The ubiquitous Chinaman takes service in the seaports where Armenian and other immigrants arrive. But it might prove tedious to enumerate all the races and communities that here dwell together under the ægis of the *Pax Britannica*, with this one title to be called a nation, its elements imperfectly fused or even in a state of mutual repulsion, kept apart by antipathies of race and superstition, speaking over ten score tongues, with the mongrel Hindustani as main language of intercommunication, and Hinduism as the prevalent religion.

Religion may be taken as the key-note of Indian life and history, shadowed from very early days by a bent to mysticism, asceticism, and other-worldiness. While our ancestors were still dark-minded barbarians, their Aryan kinsmen migrating to Hindostan had developed a singular degree of culture, especially in religious thought. Before Greece or Rome became illustrious, the Vedic hymns bespeak lofty ideas of the unseen, and the Brahminical priesthood

appear as philosophers, legislators, and poets of no mean rank. The legends of Greece and of India show kinsmanship, but Indian thought turned inwards as the Greek mind outwards. The first historical notices of Hindostan mark a high level not only of material but of moral civilization, as well as a manly temper of warriors well able to defend the soil they had won. This enervating climate, however, with its easy efforts for existence, has proved an influence of degeneracy, and most clearly so in the matter of belief. Good seed which here sprang up so quickly was always apt to wither under a too scorching sun, or to run to rank foliage rather than to fruit. Early Brahminism, itself a marked growth in thought, after a time began to be choked by the heathenism it had overshadowed. It sent out a new shoot in Buddhism, a faith of noble ideals which to this day surpasses all others in the number of its adherents. That first great missionary creed in turn became a jungle of sapless formulas, and after 1000 years died out in the land of its birth. Then grew up modern Hinduism, a mingling of Brahminical dreams of divinity and Buddhist love for humanity, interwoven with the aboriginal superstitions, the whole forming a tangled maze where the great Hindu trinity, of Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Siva the Destroyer, take Protean shapes as a pantheon of innumerable gods, amid which higher minds may turn upwards, seeking one Almighty Spirit, but the vulgar crowd fix their attention rather on grotesque idols, base fetishes, symbols of fear and sensuality, fitly adored with degrading rites and observances.

In this deeply-rooted wilderness of misbelief one of the greatest obstacles to progress, and the most striking feature of social organization, is the system of caste, doubly fostered by superstition and pride, thriving on that slavish regard for custom which is the bane of the East. The Aryan conquerors became originally divided into three superior classes: *Brahmans*, priests; *Rajputs*, soldiers; and *Vaisyas*, tillers of the ground; and they included the despised aborigines under the general name of *Sudras*, or serfs.

## The World of To-day

Then the sudras began to split up into particular classes, the superior ranks also being subdivided, while still careful to distinguish themselves as the "twice-born" castes, who wear the sacred thread, badge of their spiritual aristocracy. Thus the castes have grown to be innumerable, counted by hundreds, if not by thousands, each making it a sacred duty to hold itself

dox Hindu finds it necessary to use his own pot or cup, and to prepare his own meal where not in company with his fellows. Caste is shown by dress, by the tools of a man's trade, and by many minute signs that escape a European but are easily interpreted by the native who knows his world. It does not necessarily coincide with social position; a powerful prince may by birth



Prayers by the Wayside

Bourne & Shepherd

The worshippers are prostrating themselves before emblems of the cobra and other deadly snakes.

cut off from others by distinctions of rank and occupation. Members of different castes cannot marry, will not eat together, must not take food cooked by an inferior; indeed a high-caste Hindu will throw away his dinner and go hungry if so much as the shadow of an outsider have fallen upon it, and smash the vessel from which a proud European has drunk. The very touch of a lower caste is pollution, so that a Brahman doctor may have to feel his patient's pulse through a film of thin paper. Each ortho-

be of lower caste than many of those who humbly serve him, but, *quoad sacra*, have the right to despise him. In our native army a high-caste Brahman will take orders from an officer who must do *poojah* before him when his sacred character comes into question. Whatever caste a man belongs to by birth, it is rare for him to rise out of this, an awkward position for castes whose hereditary trade is crime.

If by any neglect of its unwritten ordinances one has violated his caste, he may

have to make atonement by going through some humiliating and disgusting ordeal, one feature in which is hardly mentionable to ears polite, else he becomes an out-caste pariah, shunned by those to whom alone he can look for the kindly offices of life, doomed to the ruin in this world which seems his fate in the next. The force of caste obligations varies in different parts; on the Mahrattas, for instance, they sit more lightly than on the Bengalese; but the sentiment underlying them leavens even Mohammedans brought into contact with Hindus. Englishmen who, in their haughty attitude towards racial inferiors here, unconsciously illustrate the origin of caste, profess to respect it as far as possible; but under their management of India its scruples are often bound to go to the wall. A Brahman who enlists in the army can hardly escape the degrading touch of leather; one who gets sent to prison may find some difficulty in having the services of a higher-caste cook; travelling by railway brings temptation to impiety, when through a long journey a scrupulous believer must go without a cooked meal, and if he have not his own drinking-vessel must make shift to have the water poured into his closed hands by the water-carrier, whose touch is defilement. Sepoys taken to the cold heights of Afghanistan have had to be forbidden their ceremonial ablutions, which in that climate often proved deadly.

The mere fact of travelling to England, as better-class natives do in increasing numbers for education and other purposes, compromises caste sanctity; but so many are in this case as now to form a class considerable enough to defy public opinion. Association with Europeans in domestic service should wear down the restrictions of caste, though these may be so far encouraged by prudent housekeepers as a substitute for locking cellar or cupboard. Educated and wealthy natives, in private if not in public, begin to neglect such inconvenient prejudices; but it is unfortunately too often observed how they copy our worse more readily than our better manners. An Indian saying is that the first sign of a native's

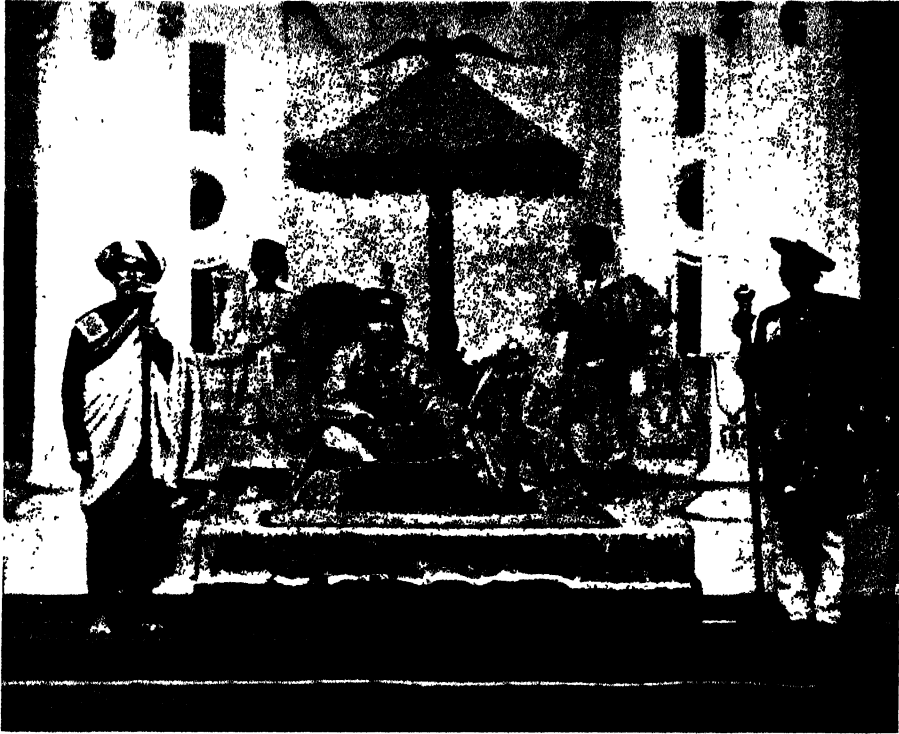
Christianization will be to get drunk, the second to marry a widow, and the third depth of iniquity when he so far forgets himself as to eat beef. Reformed Hindu systems, such as that of the Sikhs, reject caste, whose barriers seem to have been thrown down for a time by Buddhism; but among the general body of the people it is a tyranny, tempered only by such inconsistencies as are found between the theory and the practice of other creeds, and now by various influences of relaxation which seem likely to be progressive. There are considerable masses of old native stocks who have never come under this yoke; but these out-castes are looked down on as the dregs of the population, among which ruder tribes often amalgamate as new castes.

The slavish condition of women is another barrier to progress, heightened by the Mohammedanism that in many parts of India has worked upon the older faith, the two religions indeed having a corrupting influence on each other. A point of respectability, like keeping a carriage, is that mother or daughter be a *purdah* woman, curtained from sight of the other sex, pent up in zenanas for a life of petty gossip and childish amusement. Nothing in our habits more amazes a native than the fact of English ladies openly dancing, riding, playing at ball with men, as only his shameless nautch-girls would do. To us again nothing seems more ridiculous than the mystery that surrounds an Indian lady, who cannot travel by train without being ladled from a shut-up box into the barred caravan, like a wild-beast den, reserved for the like of her; and if such a one be not available will insist on stifling any European women who may be her fellow-travellers, by keeping doors and windows closed; as English gentlemen may have to put up with the companionship of a rajah attended by a naked fakir as his chaplain, or of a Moslem who at the hour of prayer spreads out his carpet across the narrow floor. It is seldom, indeed, that women of the two races need thus come into contact, social intercourse being hardly possible between them.

The Eastern woman, where not a drudge,

is looked on as mainly a breeder of children. In India marriage is almost a religious duty for the man, whose soul would be at sore loss if he did not rear a son to perform his funeral rites. Matrimony being a matter of business between the two families, a match will often be arranged for mere

fortunate, dazed by grief, drugged into ecstasy, or forced on to the pyre by stern priests, was held bound to burn herself alive beside the husband's body as one for whom life was no longer worth living in this world. This custom of *suttee* is one with regard to which our Government has broken its rule



A Hindu Bride and Bridegroom

Bourne & Shepherd

Matrimony among the Hindus is largely a business arrangement between the two families. Marriage in childhood is the rule, and neither the boy bridegroom nor his girl bride are likely to be more than fourteen years old, and may be much less. After the ceremony the bride returns to her future home for three days for feasting and various formalities, but she does not take up her abode there till she is grown up.

children, who may never see one another till the union comes to be consummated. If the boy-husband die in the interval, the unfortunate girl is doomed to the miserable lot of a widow, who can never mate without impiety, and who, though a prince's daughter, shorn and stripped of her ornaments, must resign herself to becoming an abject outcast among her father's lowest servants. Time was when such an unfor-

tunate, as in the case of hook-swinging and other cruel practices that once figured in missionary magazines; but it was not abolished without much difficulty. Woman, so capable of self-sacrifice, is here reared to look on her debasement as natural, even to hug the chains of custom. Another atrocious practice which we had hard work to put down was that of killing off female babies as a nuisance. A girl learns from the first

that she is unwelcome in the family, while her brother's chance is to be spoiled by the folly and indulgence of his proud mother, the degradation of one sex thus reacting most mischievously on the character of the other in its most plastic period of formation. Every "mem sahib" in India knows what a fond ayah will do to rear her charge as a little tyrant, where male nurses also may show an extraordinary degree of gentle indulgence and respectful affection to the children of their masters. Kindliness, patience, and suave courtesy, indeed, seem the virtues of the Hindu; and while we enumerate his faults let us note how to the sick, poor, and helpless, as well as to lazy devotees, he is charitable according to his means. "That which is done by Poor Law over the British Isles", Sir Richard Temple reminds us, "is managed by voluntary effort all over India."

Another salient feature in Hindu religion is its exaggerated regard for animal life, by writers of Voltaire's school extolled as a noble humanity that should put Christians to shame, while it appears rather a superstition founded on the idea of the transmigration of souls into animal forms. At the best this is an unpractical form of virtue such as often marks the running to seed of devout sentiment, illustrated by the legend of that Oriental saint who fed a starving tiger with his own flesh. The pious Brahman, if his venerated cow broke its leg, would think it a sin to put the poor beast out of pain, but a duty to bring it food for prolonging its misery. Killing is repugnant to the Hindu mind. The scrupulous sect of Jains, who never can have examined a drop of water through a microscope, go about with a cloth over their mouths, lest by accident they should sacri-



In the Land where the Monkey is revered: a *Bandar-wallah*

*Wallah* is a very common Indian word, which can be tacked on to almost any noun or verb, to denote a connection with the object, place, &c., which the affix follows: e.g. *Gari-wallah*, cart-man; *Surat-wallah*, one who lives in Surat. Thus, the picturesque beggar man shown above is simply "the man with the monkey"

legiously swallow a fly, and scruple to light a lamp for fear of attracting a mosquito to its doom. By this sect chiefly are maintained hospitals for maimed and diseased animals, where curing makes small part of the treatment; and such queer charity is said to be pushed to the point of feeding vermin on the body of a man, drugged to unconsciousness lest he should be irritated into slaughter of the tiny tormentors.

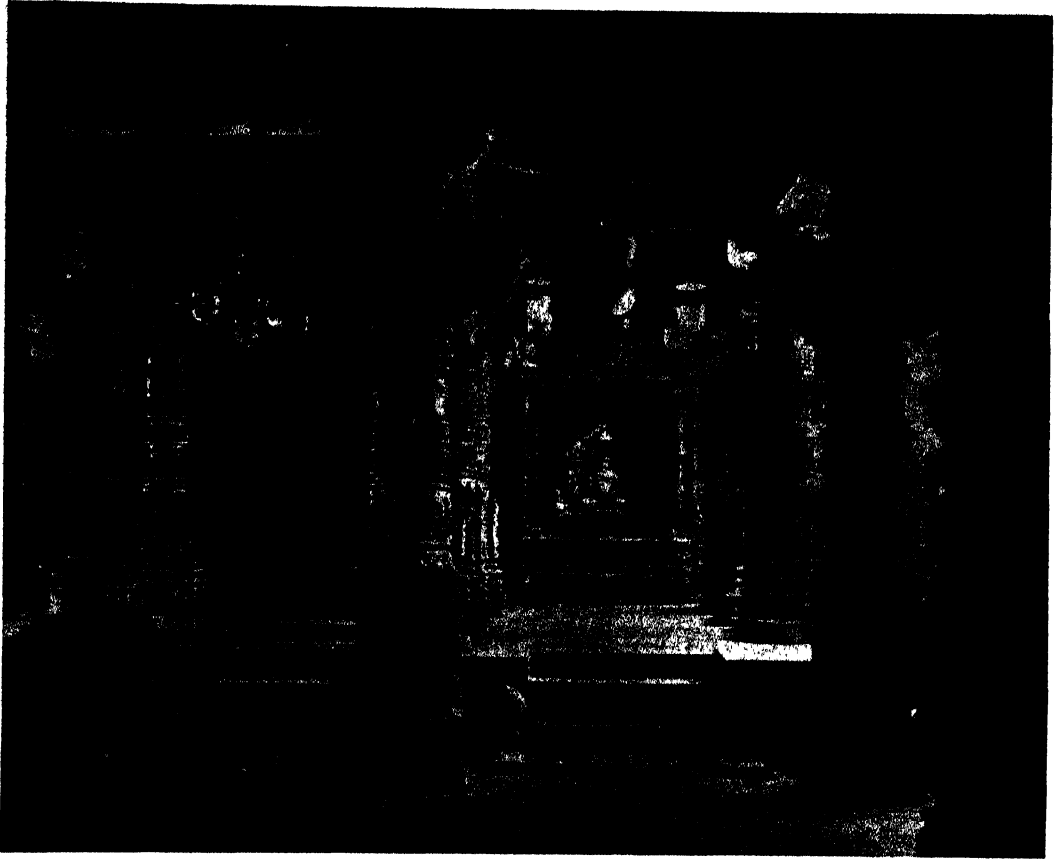
It is well known how the cow here is a peculiar object of worship, kept in filthy idleness, fed with observant care, protected against ill-usage, while the ox and the poor bullock may be cruelly goaded and tail-twisted to toilsome tasks. Nothing more horrifies a Hindu than our habit of eating beef. No cause of quarrel between Hindu and Moslem is more frequent than the latter's impious want of regard for the sacred animal. In Cashmere, a mainly Mohammedan state, ruled by Hindus, to kill a cow is punishable by lifelong imprisonment. Under our direct government the Hindu who accidentally commits such a crime can purify himself only by a penitential pilgrimage to the Ganges, not without fees to priestly absolvers. None of this race may be a butcher; even leather-dressers are a degraded caste, yet among them those who deal with the skins of cows will look down on the inferiors whose material is mere horse-skin. So strong is the prejudice that Englishmen sometimes judge well to defer to it.

Monkeys are only less revered, with an affection due to the fame of Hanuman, one of the most popular incarnations of the Hindu pantheon. Temples have been established and endowed for these tricky deities, who in troops are allowed to infest even the streets of a town, playing the thief more often than the beggar; but the robbed shopkeeper durst not drive them off by violence. A worldly proprietor may go the length of *shooing* the devastators away into his neighbour's garden; but the truly pious man, when the monkeys come to steal his mangoes, dutifully offers them *chupatties* or other tribute from his larder. The peacock is also an object of special

veneration. Keen are the grudges raised by our sportsmen's want of respect for these taboos, through which even the mild Hindu may be driven to indignant violence. For example of a case constantly recurring, when a soldier accidentally shot a calf, near Ahmedabad, soon afterwards a young officer, coming to shoot at the same place, was mobbed, seized, and stripped by the outraged villagers, who bound him naked to a tree and left him in the sun to a torturing death, from which he was saved by the timely arrival of a party of his comrades.

It is noticeable in such scrupulous tenderness of life that it does not always regard the human animal: the jailers of the Black Hole, the slaughterers of Cawnpore, would no doubt have shuddered to stain their hands with the blood of a dove. All animals, indeed, do not come off equally well with this bastard humanity, that, while straining at a gnat, swallows many a moral camel. The goat is literally made a scape-goat in religious sacrifices, and the kid is a feast for those who dare not kill a calf in a land where no small part of the people go half-starved all their lives.

Further notable features of Hindu faith, the austerity and beggary of its filthy *fakirs*, the exactions of its idle priests, the cumbrous observances of its ritual, its hideous images of innumerable gods, its stone bulls and other brutal idols, its mean village fetishes of tree or rock, its abject dread of evil spirits, that goes on finding ever new shapes for propitiation, all these, familiar to us from the reports of scandalized missionaries, are only the natural growth of superstition beneath that sweltering sky; where mental slavery makes faith a day-dream or a nightmare, and ignorant fanatics selfishly seek to work out their salvation without cultivating fruit for the use of fellow-men. Like other creeds, this has its diverse modes and manners of worship, there being many sects specially dedicated to the cult of Vishnu and Siva in their various incarnations, while the first person of their trinity seems to be held as "too bright and good" for ordinary devotion. Krishna, the Indian Apollo, a radiant youthful avatar of Vishnu, is dear



Interior of Jain Temple on Mount Aboo, Rajputana

Mount Aboo is the most sacred hill of the Jains, and a place of pilgrimage for the sect from all parts of the land. The exterior of the temples is plain, but it has been said that "nothing in architecture is so startling as the effect when the door is opened, and the interior bursts on the astonished traveller".

to women; Kali, the bloodthirsty wife of Siva, has many votaries; and the heroic Ram appears most popular, from the fact of his name making a general salutation.

One remarkable body is the Jains, strong on the west side—originally a reforming sect that appears at least as old as Buddhism—who, now largely belonging to the merchant class, have liberally spent their substance on elaborate temples such as those on Mount Aboo, at the south end of the Aravalli Hills, standing up so far seen from the plains, within sight of a railway which brings to it many pilgrims of the picturesque as well as true devotees. The astonishing rock sculptures found in various

parts of India are usually Buddhist, a fact that proves their antiquity. The finest Hindu temples are, as a rule, to be looked for in the south, beyond the tide-mark of Mohammedan invasion; but the zeal shown in this kind of piety is attested by a huge crop of holy places that have sprung up in modern times, at Benares, for instance, where two centuries ago Aurungzebe played the iconoclast among native shrines.

Unless in cases of atrocious barbarism, like *suttee*, our Government tolerates all religions, and missionary work is a matter of private enterprise, carried on by American, Moravian, and other foreign societies, as well as by British ones, whose diversity of



doctrine would surely puzzle the native if he were not accustomed to his own various cults of Vishna, of Siva, or so forth. Under five bishoprics there is an establishment of chaplains for the service of the Church of England, handicapped here by the fact that its centre of gravity has been shifting from the pulpit to the altar; so its expensive "padres" have much ado to serve their parishes of perhaps a hundred miles in extent, where under the former dispensation any officer could acceptably read the service and perhaps a sermon to out-of-the-way congregations, visited only at longer intervals for the priestly ministrations that are now more esteemed. The Roman Catholics have the advantage of a numerous and cheaply-supported clergy of lower social rank, the majority of them indeed coloured men "of sorts", not so remote in feeling and sympathy from the natives. This Church, first in the field with its adaptable version of the Christian faith, has made by far the most way in conversion, chiefly in the south, where its mission stations are of old standing. With the exception of these hereditary converts, it is a painfully significant fact that the English in India see cause to distrust so-called "Christians", who ought else to find ready employment as servants. The Protestant sect that of late years seems to make most impression is the Salvation Army, whose noisy methods and self-denying adoption of native frugality affect the Hindu mind more than the arguments of graver teachers. A married gentleman, living comfortably in a bungalow and driving a buggy, is not the native type of holiness, nor does the lightness with which their own religious obligations sit on most Britons tend to conversion of believers worth converting.

Protestant missionaries labour on against all discouragement, but in most cases they are fain to confess that they must sow their seed in the indirect way of education, through which it is hoped eventually to influence natives who attend their schools without any pretence of listening to their doctrines. The Government is not less zealous in promoting education, too much

so, judge some, looking to the swarm of baboos annually sent out into the world with a turbid flow of English and a turn for glib discontent when they find no satisfactory career open to their physical and moral qualities; while the main effect of the pains spent on them may be that they have shaken more or less loose from the restraints of their own religion without entering into ours. Universities have been established at Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Allahabad, and Lahore, with affiliated colleges, in which perhaps the most useful work is done by the teaching of medicine and engineering, too long neglected in favour of a study of literature seldom pushed to a fruitfully high standard. A hopeful sign of progress is the beginning made in female education, so that at the universities native ladies sometimes take medical degrees. High schools and elementary schools are multiplying both in our own states and the protected ones, whose more enlightened potentates establish colleges under English principals. A remarkable institution is the College of Princes at Ajmere, a sort of Indian Eton, where the sons of haughty Rajputs are taught to play our games, like the "Ranji" who made himself so popular on English cricket-fields. Another is the Martinière Colleges, for Eurasian boys and girls, at Lucknow and Calcutta, founded a century ago by General Martin, a French soldier of fortune; and since his time Lawrence and other philanthropists have provided several similar asylums for the children of English soldiers.

The schools founded or fostered by missionaries appear to be the most successful part of their work; and they are of late able to claim a greater number of converts, especially among the out-caste tribes looked down on by their countrymen. The natural reaction of our education in English is as a solvent of gross superstition; and the result often is the loss of an Indian's religion without anything better being put in its place. But another result of missionary activity is not so evident on the surface. Stubborn as the native creeds are, they become insensibly leavened by the Christian spirit, as by the general

stir of education and by the work of European scholars in bringing to light and interpreting the ancient scriptures of Hindu religion, long neglected by its own sleepy pundits. A revival of the native creeds has been generated by attempts at conversion. The first effect was the rise of reforming societies which, more or less influenced by Christianity, have sought to purify Indian theism, and to clear away the jungle of mischievous and degrading customs that had choked its higher aspirations. The most important of these bodies was the Brahma Samaj, that, inspired rather by pious sentiment than by consistent thought, has shown from the first a fissiparous tendency, in which, indeed, it corresponds to our own Protestantism. Among the heads of this rather invertebrate body, several of whom visited England, one of the most prominent was the Brahman prince, Debendra Tagore, father of Sir Rabin-dranath Tagore, now widely recognized as a poet, most famous of Indian authors, who in Europe has gained the Nobel prize for literature. Debendra may be called the Peter of the movement, clinging to Hindu observances while raising his eyes to higher thoughts; and against him like Paul stood up his early disciple Chandra Sen, who, better taught in English, was more concerned about social reform, and at one time seemed almost persuaded to call himself a Christian. His church of the "New Dispensation" in turn became torn by secession; and in the end its teacher was held to have backslided in allowing the marriage of his girl daughter to a boy prince, with idolatrous ceremonies, such a bowing in the house of Rimmon as he had formerly denounced; but spiritual pride has often blinded enthusiasts of like temper. What Professor Gilchrist aptly styles the "Volatilized Hinduism" of the Brahma Samaj, originally started by Ram Mohun Roy about a century ago, has now split up into a number of congregations, scattered about India, in general sympathy with each other's object of elevating their countrymen's religion, but with differences such as those dividing Presbyterians and Methodists. The

most vigorous appears at present to be the Arya Samaj, that, while seeking to purify Hinduism, takes an intolerant attitude towards both the Cross and the Crescent, and favours the new spirit of Indian patriotism presently to be dealt with.

The work of such reformers has excited what may be called a counter-reformation in orthodox Hinduism, that, like the Catholic Church after Luther, felt the need of justifying itself by fresh zeal and of meeting attacks on it by aggressive defence, such as the Jesuits gave to Rome. It is notable that the most earnest advocates of the old religion become inclined to put in the background its grosser features, dwelling rather on its spiritual soul, even sometimes seeking to harmonize it with all forms of elevated faith; also that their new activities have been much after Christian example in sending out missions, in opening schools and colleges, and in imitating so alien institutions as the Young Men's Christian Association and the Salvation Army. All the creeds of India have in like manner been provoked to good works, in some cases to salutary reforms, if also to outbursts of murderous fanaticism, as seems the chief effect on Moslem revivalists; and the spread of mental culture must tend to shame men out of base superstitions. Here and there a European has been drawn into association with native sects, more than one of which has pushed its doctrines across the ocean to find a certain number of converts, mostly in America, where so many inquiring minds prove receptive of "some new thing". The best known of such offshoots of misbelief is Theosophy, seeded in India by Occidental cranks and impostors out of an extraordinary hotbed of fraud, jugglery, and immorality, yet it has recommended its vague teachings to many all over the world who appear content to shut their eyes on its origin. The misty religion, that breeds so many sects and fosters so many superstitions, seems most eclectic in its range, attracting scholarly interest by its ancient speculations, while it readily absorbs the coarse animism of aboriginal stocks, and in the north melts into Buddhism holding

out under the shadow of the Himalayas. To some extent Indian creeds readily blur into each other's edges, the most salient contrast being between the prevalent Hinduism and the Mohammedanism of about a quarter of the people.

The Hindu, who holds beef-eating in horror, is not altogether a vegetarian, any more than is the Moslem hater of pork; but by poverty, rather than on principle, the inhabitants of the peninsula are mainly temperate in diet; and fortunately its climate is congenial to temperance as to indigence. Whatever show of gold and gems it may here and there scrape together to dazzle the eye, India is a poor country. Taking millionaire rajahs together with famine-stricken coolies, it has been calculated that each inhabitant has at the most an average of three halfpence a day to live upon. The necessities of life are cheap enough, indeed, in a good season. A soldier's or a servant's pay comes to a few rupees a month, out of which he sometimes will keep a large family. The staple of food is grain, rice, millet, barley, wheat, and others, helped out with milk and ghee, the boiled butter that is such universal "kitchen" of a native's simple fare. The *chupattie* or girdle-cake is his common baking. Sweetmeats, made with sugar and ghee, are favourite dainties that come in very useful on such occasions as long railway journeys, when the native cannot cook for himself according to the rules of his caste. The *banya*, or merchant, and all wealthy enough to make free use of such luxuries, will run to fat and paunch; the hard-working peasant, who must dip charily into the ghee-pot, is more like to be thin even to gauntness, yet with a tendency to pot-belly, swollen by masses of vegetable food. This kind of diet seems to produce a softness of body and a mildness of temper that has made them like sheep before more wolfish assailants. Yet, wanting in stamina and in spirit as he is, the spindle-shanked native often shows an activity and power of endurance that might put to shame the beef-fed Briton, whose pride better bears comparison with the unwieldy laziness of self-

indulgent townsmen. The use of opium and *bhang*—an intoxicating drug made from Indian hemp—answers here to our alcoholic dissipations as a rule; yet sons of Hindu Belial, too, can make beasts of themselves on the native rum called *arrack*. Betel is largely chewed, causing a red discoloration of the teeth; and tobacco, home-grown and inferior in quality, is much enjoyed by both sexes in the Oriental hubble-bubble, or rolled up in leaves into funnel-shaped cigarettes.

The climate, in most cases, relieves the working man from the need of all but one indispensable garment; yet the modest Hindu has two waist-cloths, which he so handles as never to expose himself even in his public ablutions. Some sort of turban, the thicker the better for his shaven head, is more necessary than shoes, which must never be kept on before a superior. For other dress, a sort of tight trousers or loose hose are much worn under various kinds of coats. Mohammedan women, more often than Hindus, may be seen in such trousers; but the common feature of female dress is the *sari*, a long strip of cloth, that, like the Highlander's plaid, can be wound about the body in various ways or drawn half over the head as a hood. The upper classes have their more elaborate costumes, which begin to be supplanted by or ludicrously mixed with European apparel, as the *cum-merbund*, so common in the East long before the Jäger system had been advertised, makes its appearance even in Piccadilly of a hot summer. All classes have of late taken to umbrellas, formerly looked upon as prerogative of rank and dignity.

The greater part of the people are cultivators of the land, from which on rich soil they may win two, or even three, annual crops by patience, industry, and constant care. The *ryot* tills his fields in the way handed down from father to son. Large farms and expensive machinery are beyond his ideas; his main artificial need is the water-supply, for which he must often depend on elaborate irrigation-works. He scratches his fruitful plot with a wooden plough, drops in the seed, and nature does



Copyright

H. G. Ponting, F.R.G.S.

Nautch-girls of Old Delhi

the rest. When his spring or autumn crop is ripe, he squats on the ground to reap the grain in handfuls with a crooked sickle, taking a quarter of an acre for a good day's work. Burdened as he is by taxes and assessments due to the Government as lord of the soil, the economical peasant strives to hoard up silver coin, which may make the trousseau of his daughter when she is to be got rid of in marriage. After the ornaments in which his womankind often carry about no small part of the family wealth, his chief ostentation is the giving of a costly feast on occasion of a birth, wedding, or funeral; when, to make a display among his neighbours, he too often indebts himself to the class of money-lenders who grow fat upon his narrow margin between income and expenditure. Another thriving profession here is that of marriage-makers, feed for acting as go-

between to bring suitable couples together, without reference to natural inclination.

This is not the only curious trade in India. There are beggars so well off as to be able to ride on horseback. Jugglers, acrobats, nautch-girls are all recognized classes. There are even bands of professional thieves, who, when out of work, make excellent watchmen, on the proverbial principle of setting a thief to catch a thief. The Thugs were murderers by trade till our Government put down their industry, crimes of violence, once so common, being now almost stamped out unless in hill districts, or occasionally in towns, when religious excitement boils over into riot.

Most occupations, transmitted from father to son, are a matter of caste. There are the *bheesties*, or water-carriers, whose skin bags only a man of low caste may handle. There are the *dhobies*, or washermen, the

## The World of To-day

exercise of whose craft is as much thumping as scrubbing, and who at a riverside may be seen making havoc with linen. There are the *dirzees*, or needlemen, that sit cross-legged in an employer's veranda till they have finished their job, and will exactly copy a suit of European clothes even to the rents and patches. There are the weavers who produce native fabrics not yet driven out of the market by our machine-made goods. There are the potters and the metal-workers who will not fail for work where every man must carry about with him his own cooking-pot and drinking *lota*. Each department of domestic service has its caste of hereditary menials: the horse must have his grass-cutter as well as his groom, and the sahib's boots cannot be handled by the man who makes his bed, so that quite a modest English household needs a dozen do-little servants. Lazy fellows, with no regular calling, find congenial situations as the swaggering, swashbuckling followers of some ostentatious nobleman. The besetting ambition of a native who has learned English is any post under Government—clerk, messenger, or policeman—that gives a chance to play the great man in a small way and pocket bribes for the sahib's favour he is supposed to influence.

Truth, uprightness, and straightforward independence will not be the strong points of a nation too much broken in to the rule of tyrannous masters. Bribes, *backshish*, *dustoor*, money given and taken underhand or in the way of bounty, instead of by open contract for honest service, are the curse of the East. A servant who would scorn to rob his master expects by *dustoor*, custom, a commission on transactions that go through his hands. A driver or porter, who has been trebly overpaid, will give up the rest of his day to sitting at the employer's door, on the chance of dunning out of him a few more annas. The humblest agent takes as undoubted his right to sweat the earnings of those working under him. That the official's palm should be greased by the suitor, that the tax-gatherer should be an extortioner, seem but matter of course. In token of obeisance the inferior must offer



A Typical Fakir, Benares

Note the shrunken proportions of the (permanently) uplifted arm and the long uncut nails of his left hand.

some present, however small, which the lordly superior may merely touch and remit. The native, starved in manly self-respect, hungers to be put in some kind of authority, out of which his vanity as well as his covetousness may be fed. Men who will cringe like dogs, lying and flattering when they must, show great aptitude for playing the bully when they may. Striking will be the contrast between the obeisant servility of a baboo railway clerk to the sahib, and the haughty airs he puts on to the sahib's low-caste servant. But for our rule, India, degenerate under so many yokes, would be a scene of general oppression; and our hard task is to impose peace and fair dealing

upon its rival peoples, its manifold classes, its hostile creeds, and its would-be tyrants.

On the top of this seething three hundred millions, the conquering race float like drops of oil upon water, hardly a quarter of a million strong, not one white face to a thousand brown and black ones. The great majority are officials and soldiers; few Englishmen seek to make their homes for life here; and it is well known how only on the hills can white children be healthily reared. We are but encamped among the natives, in whom our interest seldom develops into sympathy. Sympathy is difficult indeed between two races whose strong and weak points so ill correspond, the character of the one marked by rough frankness and vigour, of the other by smooth-tongued flattery and helpless servility. That the natives respect us is not more certain than that, as a rule, they do not love us. Under the circumstances, social amalgamation is out of the question, and unfortunately it is not the best part of our morals and manners that prove most easily copied in the East.

The British official is the true noble, whom high-born rajahs are willing to ape in various ways. Then comes the class of private Englishmen, who cannot here be called civilians: traders, planters, and so forth, chiefly congregated in the great cities or in certain districts exploited by their enterprise. The status of European foreigners may prove a little awkward, unless in large ports, where their consuls look after their interests. All other social pretensions give place to rank in the service; it is serious work making out orders of precedence at mess and club dinners, where ladies are often admitted, who show themselves most keenly alive to such questions. The natives well appreciate distinctions between *Burra Sahib* and *Chota Sahib*; but to them every white face is more or less revered, and a European almost everywhere finds himself saluted and salaamed to with the courteous deference that comes natural to these people. Sahibs of the old school would boast how they expected a native nobleman to dis-

mount and stand by the roadside to let the white lord pass in due respect.

If the whole truth must be told, it were to be wished all English folk in India better represented our national virtues. Many of those who seek their fortunes here fail to stand the trial of finding themselves members of an aristocracy that takes rank above conquered wealth and titles. The brutal side of our nature seems too much drawn out by an obsequiousness to which men have not been accustomed at home; and our arrogance is apt to show itself rather in an inconsiderate bluntness than in selfish dignity. The lower one goes in rank and social obligations, the more one sees this. The British subaltern's contempt for "niggers" is no elevating influence, nor, with all his good points, does T. Atkins, as represented by his friend Mr. Rudyard Kipling, seem a worthy missionary of civilization. The same author illustrates the deteriorating effect of this exile on women, who, parted from their children and without bracing duties or occupation, are the more disposed to fall victims to that power always ready to find work for idle hands and vacant thoughts. The snobbish sin of social jealousy, indeed, is here held in salutary bonds. Everyone has his fixed place in the hierarchy of official or military rank; and as most families' income is known to a rupee, there will be little temptation to pretentious extravagance. On moral and mental, if not on physical vigour, the climate is apt to tell enervatingly. It is, or used to be, noticed how, when old Indians took a religious turn of mind, it often ran into narrow moulds, shaped by studying obscure prophecies under a blinding sun, and perhaps by the antagonizing effect of heathen fanaticism. At the present day educated Anglo-Indians are kept less out of touch with thought and culture at home. But the more rapid and frequent communication with Europe turns away their attention from the land which most of them hope to get out of as soon as possible; and many of our countrymen learn little about their place of banishment beyond such features as are forced upon their notice.

## The World of To-day

The old Company's servants were more at home here, entering into the life of the people in a way that lowered their own moral standards; so that on the whole the closer connection with England makes for good on the Englishman's self-respect, while it keeps him more aloof from the strangers among whom he spends his shorter spells of exile. Touching, indeed, is the loyalty with which he looks to "home" for his patterns in small matters as in great. Wherever he be stationed, among the muggy swamps of Bengal or on the burning plains of Scinde, one notes with amusement how the banished Briton would fain cling to his own customs and costumes; how, as soon as the setting sun allows, he throws off the thick topee for whatever cap may be the mode at Aldershot or St. Andrews, and how at night he scrupulously arrays himself in the combination of black cloth and starched linen that seems about the most unsuitable dress that could be devised for such a climate. In certain places it is, or was, the fashion for a dinner guest to arrive in the orthodox swallow-tail, attended by a servant carrying a cool white jacket, which a considerate host would presently invite him to assume. On the Calcutta side the chimney-pot hat has remained an idol of respectability. Yet such superstitious mortifications of the flesh sometimes shape themselves under heathen influences. That the Anglo-Indian Mrs. Grundy is an incarnation of Siva seems shown by the fact of the correct visiting-hours in India being its perilous noon, when no sensible person would stir from home, unless under the force of duty or social religion.

What seems another false doctrine and practice is of truly British origin. Besides the *chota hazri*, "little breakfast", with which he begins his early day, this son of beef and beer professes to "keep up his strength" by three heavy meals—but some wiser stomachs omit the mid-day "tiffin"—eating an amount of meat which the example of the temperate natives should show him to be needless if not harmful. And if, under the constant provocation of this sweltering sky, he give way to his

nation's besetting sin, it has become proverbial in India how every glass makes a "peg" in his coffin. In this matter of food and drink, indeed, it is hoped that our countrymen are learning to consider more carefully their own good and that of those around them. The Anglo-Indian, if he would remain a good Englishman, must always be specially on his guard both against corrupting influences from within and from without. His great danger here, a danger best resisted by those most qualified to exercise authority, is that of "getting the wind into his head", unless it be that of getting his liver out of order. To an outsider it is instructive to note the difference between those temporary exiles on an outward and on a homeward voyage. Going back from England, refreshed by contact with their mother earth, they make the best of company. Leaving India, they are more apt to be found cliquish, snappish, given to petty jealousies and quarrels, and that attitude of mind known as "putting on side", for which Indian slang substitutes the expressive phrase used above.

The globe-trotter, with his notebook, by no means such a favourite as he is now a frequent figure in India, perhaps owes some of this resentment to an uneasy consciousness that his notes may not always be of admiration for his fellow-countrymen here. That "G.T.", as he is belittled, may well think that more and not less English interest in this vast dominion of ours would be an advantage, even if it ruffled men who might profit by unprejudiced criticism. Yet "Mr. Paget, M.P.," does ill to dogmatize on all Indian problems after a cold-weather tour. What forces itself on his attention is the unsympathetic manner that too much alloys the Anglo-Saxon's dealings with an inferior race, born to vices of abasement for which we masterful strangers make small allowance. What he may not see on his hasty tour are the efforts after justice of such a government as has hitherto been unknown in India, the patient labours of over-burdened officials, the devotion to duty which so often meets no reward but an early grave.

## POLITICAL DIVISIONS

Space fails for here telling fitly that marvellous tale of English conquest, which in little more than a century supplanted the Great Mogul's empty title by the firm rule of the British Empire. Our trading settlements, fixed about three points of the coast, had made the core of the separate presidencies Bengal, Madras, and Bombay; and when Warren Hastings was appointed the first Governor-General, Calcutta, then the base of our most important advance towards dominion, became the chief seat of his power. Here ruled the Viceroy, helped by the deliberations of his Executive and Legislative Councils, and hampered, as Anglo-Indians are apt to think, by the votes of public opinion at home, where the Secretary for India, responsible to Parliament, has also a council of experienced advisers in London. At Madras and at Bombay we had governors and councils of subordinate dignity. But the administration of India has outgrown the Presidency system, long represented by different army *cadres* and divisions of the civil service, as by the *esprit de corps* of the Madras and the Bombay "sides"; and our rule shows a tendency to decentralization in sharing out its enormous tasks and responsibilities.

Our Indian possessions are now grouped into some dozen provinces, under governors, lieutenant-governors, or commissioners, all responsible to the vice-regal centre, while a few places here and there stand directly under the Governor-General, as Alsace did under the German emperor. Among these territories immediately administered by us are islanded several hundreds of great and small states trusted with a more or less nominal independence, whose native potentates, bearing various high-sounding titles, reign indeed, but govern only under the eye of British residents or agents, a check on their power such as public opinion should be in a more developed society. In some cases it is part of the arrangement with such pro-

tected and superintended states that a proportion of their military force, trained by English officers, shall be at command of the Imperial Government for common defence. Sometimes the British authorities undertake to collect or administer the revenues; or this may be left to the native ruler. Here he will be carefully watched and checked; there, again, it is judged best to let him deal with his own people in his own way, so long as open scandal be avoided. A great point of difference is as to whether he may or may not be trusted with the power of life and death. There are other details of power and dignity that depend on the circumstances in each case; but all these titular sovereigns, more or less worthy to rule and contented to be ruled, know well how they hold their sceptres only on sufferance; and the descendants of the old nizams and nabobs seem now chiefly ambitious about such distinctions as the number of guns in the salute granted them by the Paramount Power, to which a few of the most enlightened princes show themselves wisely loyal. In all, besides the larger body of our own subjects, there are over sixty millions of inhabitants for whose welfare we have thus become responsible.

Let us now take a rapid run round these territories, noting the character and prominent points of each; then we may return to visit the chief cities more at leisure.

Bengal, the richest and the most thickly-populated province of India, is mainly the populous region watered by the Ganges and its tributaries, on which stand famous cities—Moorshedabad (Murshidabad), capital of the nabobs, now in part ruined, but in Clive's days to be described as the equal of London for wealth and population; Patna, centre of the opium industry, at one time the chief place in India, still extending for 12 miles along the sacred river; Dacca, another ex-capital, once renowned for its delicate muslins, as now for its workmanship of shell-ornaments; and many others



of both historical and commercial note. Beyond the Brahmaputra and Ganges delta the Bengal territory curves round the head of the Bay of Bengal, on the eastern side of which is the important port of Chittagong. The inhabitants here are a mingling of Burmese, Hindus, and Moslem intruders. From the coast of this gulf come the hardy Lascars who man our ships, while the Bengalee of the inland plains hardly ventures to serve as a soldier, but, after a course of English schooling, is apt to be bold and free with his tongue.

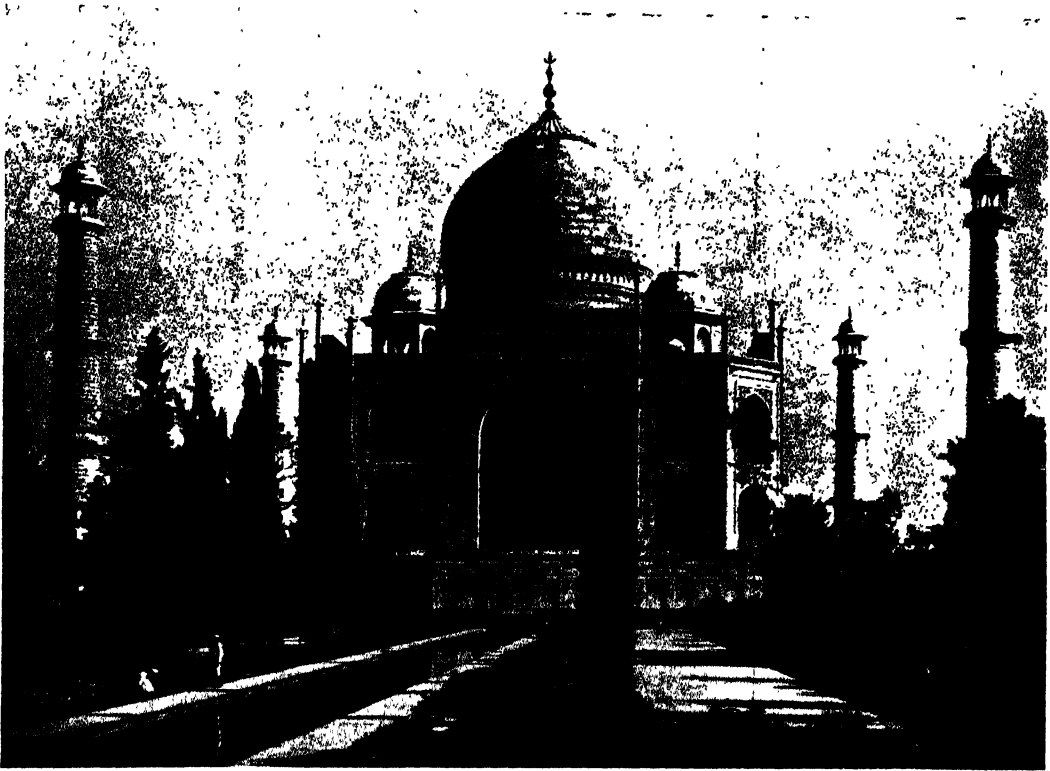
Bengal has come to be divided, as too unwieldy for a single administration; and the western part, including Behar, Orissa, and Chota Nagpore, is now erected into a separate lieutenant-governorship. This new arrangement annuls a former one that provoked noisy discontent among native lawyers and journalists of Calcutta, by which the largely Mohammedan Eastern Bengal, having Dacca as its capital, was for a time joined with Assam, since restored to its former status as a separate province.

The Chief Commissionership of Assam is a region of mountains and valleys well watered by the Brahmaputra and its countless tributaries, where forests, rice-fields, and tea-gardens, not to speak of mineral wealth, promise for it a prosperous future. As yet it is thinly inhabited by a very mixed population, and contains no large cities, though overgrown remains of palaces and temples mark a state of former civilization. Its official seat, Shillong, in our time half-ruined by an earthquake, stands nearly 5000 feet up in the Khasia ridge, bordering the Brahmaputra valley on the south, beyond which the Assam territory extends over another watershed towards the Bay of Bengal. Assam is parted from Burma by a group of dependent hill states, one of which, Manipore, came into notice in 1891, when here the scenes of the Mutiny were re-enacted in miniature.

North of Assam the Himalayas are edged by three native states, forming a neutral zone between our territory and Tibet, beneath whose influence they have stood, but in different degrees, under the thumb

of Britain. The easternmost is the nominally independent strip of Bhutan, whose scattered Buddhist population of Tibetan race, fringing off into wild tribes, is kept in order by our military outposts. West of this, Sikkim, in which rises the Tosti, a river that has shifted its course between the Brahmaputra and the Ganges, is under British protection, and, though small, has importance as threshold of Tibet, which it borders by lofty lakes at the foot of Kunchinjunga and other Himalayan giants. Near its southern edge, connected with the plains by a mountain railway, stands Darjeeling, one of our great hill sanatoriums, about the grand beauties of which some visitors grow enthusiastic to the point of entitling it the noblest scenery in the world, while others grumble over freaks of weather that remind us of our own climate. Farther west, stretching in lofty terraces under Mount Everest and for 400 miles beyond, Nepaul, with its capital Katmandoo, and its powerful army whose lord is overlooked by a British Resident, forms politically such a barrier towards Tibet as the malarious Terai does between itself and British India. From its warlike hill-tribes are recruited those regiments of small, hardy Ghoorkas whose services have become so much appreciated in our Indian wars.

South of Nepaul, the ex-kingdom of Oudh, peopled by a strain more manly than its neighbours of Bengal, along with Rohilcund, whose inhabitants also show the vigour of their Afghan blood, and the central plains of the Ganges, over 100,000 square miles in all, make up the Lieutenant-Governorship of the ex-North-western Provinces and Oudh, a name now exchanged for that of the "United Provinces" of Agra and Oudh, to avoid confusion with the new North-western Frontier Province mentioned below. Allahabad, "City of God", is the capital, and in this division, on the Ganges or its affluents, come many of the most famous cities of India: Benares; Mirzapore; Lucknow of glorious and Cawnpore of sorrowful memory; Agra, the city of Akbar; Bareilly, the chief place of Rohilcund; Meerut, where the Mutiny broke



Bourne &amp; Shepherd

The most lovely Work of Human Hands: the Taj Mahal, Agra (see p. 227)

out; and Rampur, in a small native state noted for its shawls.

Separated from the south side of the United Provinces by the native states of Bundelcund, are the Central Provinces, a Commissionership containing some of the wildest and most varied regions of the peninsula in the broken country lying between the courses of the Nerbudda and the Godaveri, where mineral riches await development. The population here is not so thick, under ten millions in an extent of about 85,000 square miles; and there are few large towns. Nagpur is the chief city; another important commercial centre being Jubbulpore (Jabalpur), on the railway between Bombay and Calcutta. Beside the division of Nagpur, westwards, Berar, once part of the native state Hyderabad, is now held in pledge and administered by our own Government.

To the north of this British territory lie the quasi-independent domains of Central India, chief among them Gwalior and Indore, ruled by the descendants of Mahratta potentates who bear respectively the titles Scindia and Holkar. Farther north, bordering the Punjab, a great hilly region is covered by the many states of Rajputana, large and small, under their Rajput princes, some of whom seem more fit to rule a spirited people than the effeminate tyrants we have elsewhere displaced. The principal of these are Mewar, better known by the name of its capital, Udaipur; Marwar (Jodhpore); and Jeypore (Jaipur), whose modern capital makes one of the handsomest cities of India.

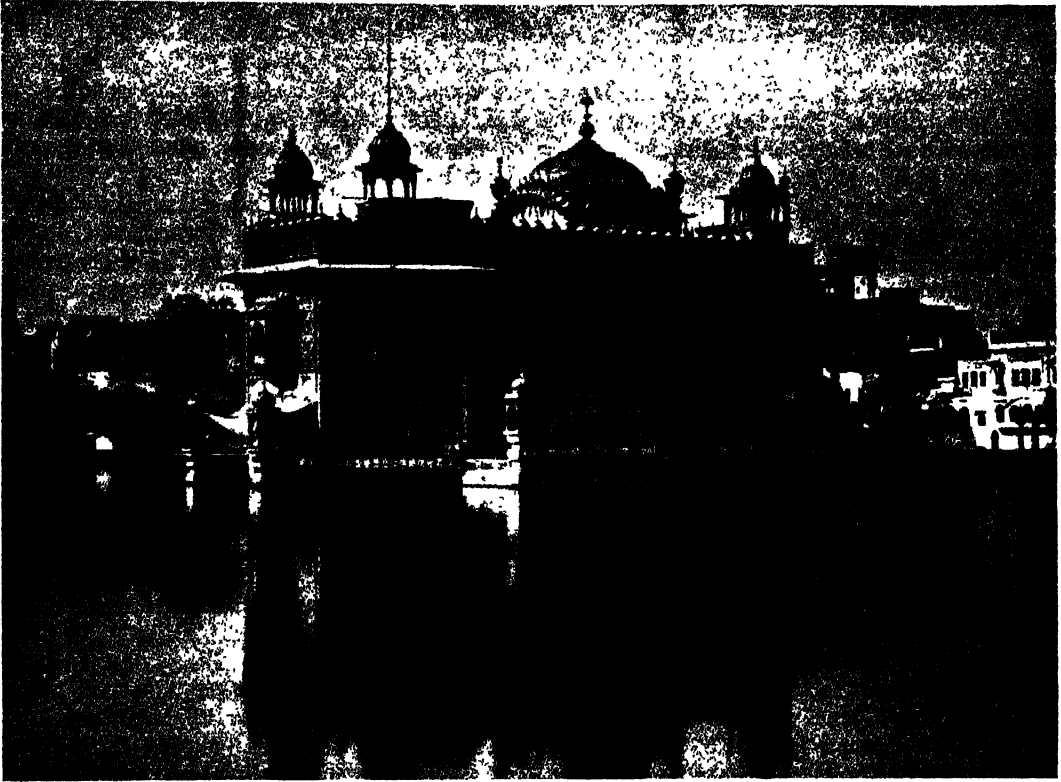
North of Rajputana comes the Punjab, of which Lieutenant-Governorship Lahore is the administrative centre. Almost as large a place, and flourishing by its trade with

Cashmere, is the neighbouring Amritsar, whose "Golden Temple" on the "Lake of Eternal Life" marks it as the sacred city of the Sikhs, who have been called the Protestants of Hinduism. The "Granth" is their holy book, and the name Sikh, meaning "Disciples", denotes not so much a nation as a religion, founded about the time of our Reformation by Nanak, a prophet who sought to extract the purer spirit of rival creeds and to throw down the barriers of race and caste. Inspired by this elevating faith, and tempered by persecution, his followers, while falling away from their prophet's high ideals, became the "Ironsides" of a warring world, and set up a loose federation that dominated the north-west of India till, half a century ago, they came into collision with the British. Their conquest gave us more trouble than that of any other Indian people; but these foemen worthy of our steel have since proved our most congenial and trust-worthy subjects, supplying the manliest part of the native army, and serving us not less well across the sea, in Africa and China. Several districts here are still granted a feudatory self-government, Puttiala the largest of them, with over a million inhabitants. The Punjab extends to the foot of the Himalayas, from whose southern slope one looks down on it lying flat as the palm of a hand, lined by its rivers.

Beyond the western frontier of the Punjab our military station Quetta, an advanced post thrown out into Baluchistan, guards the way to Kandahar at the south end, as in the north that of Peshawar watches the Khyber Pass and the road to Kabul. Baluchistan, as well as Afghanistan, from which India has been so often invaded, are dealt with apart. Here, almost within sight of our cantonments, dwell the wild Afridi and other clans, with whom we have had so many border wars, down to that costly one in 1897, fruitful in glorious deeds like the storming of Dargai and the defence of Chitral. For the better management of such troublesome neighbours this corner has lately been cut off from the Punjab and formed into a separate North-western Frontier Province

to be ruled by experienced officers under control of the central Government. Rough and ready rules best fit these bloodthirsty tribes, who have no respect but for the law of the strong hand; and military power is specially needed here, the value of this barren hill country being as a defensive wall of India. Another great military station is Rawal Pindi, east of the Indus, by which goes the road into Cashmere and over the Himalayas to Gilgit, northern outpost of our Indian Empire. The beauties of Cashmere have been already spoken of, and the features of Srinagar, its largest town. At Jammu, on the southern edge, its prince has another seat, to which goes off a branch from the railway that, on military considerations, has been pushed on to Peshawar.

From the Punjab southwards stretches the long line of the Bombay Presidency, beginning with that hot and dusty province of Scinde, a strip of alluvial plain bordered by sandhills, where the thermometer is said to rise to 130° in hot seasons. This has Kurrachee for its chief port, and Hyderabad on the Indus for its capital, to be distinguished from the state bearing the same name in the Deccan. South of Scinde come the Runn of Cutch, that strange region already described; then the innumerable small principalities of Kattyawar; and Baroda, ruled by a native potentate proud to bear the title of Guicowar, "Herdsman", handed down by his Mahratta ancestors. This brings us to the rich plain of Gujerat, stronghold of the Jains, where Ahmedabad stands in British territory, junction of a narrow-gauge line which on this side makes the shortest route to Delhi. Here Surat, one of the earliest foreign settlements, has dwindled from its rank as the greatest port in India. That place is now taken by Bombay, of which due mention will be made presently. Hence the Konkan runs on between the sea and the western Ghauts, where Poona, Satara, Kolapore, and other towns were strongholds of the Mahratta freebooters that had almost anticipated our conquest of India. Poona's elevated situation has recommended it as chief



Amritsar: the "Golden Temple" and "Lake of Eternal Life"

The dome of the temple is of copper, covered with gold-foil—hence its name. Amritsar (from *Amrita Turas*, "Pool of Immortality") is the sacred city of the Sikhs, and, next to Lahore, the largest in the Punjab.

cantonment for our troops; and it is a place of over 160,000 people. In the south of the Bombay territory an enclave is formed by Goa, still possessed by the Portuguese, who were our forerunners here, their old city's former richness attested by its magnificent cathedral and the shrine of St. Francis Xavier, the great Jesuit missionary, while its main industry nowadays seems to be the supply of those "Portuguese" Christians so much in demand on this coast as servants, who are practically more of negroes than Portuguese.

Between Bombay and Madras, in the Deccan, are the Mohammedan conquests, Hyderabad and Mysore. The former, lying between the Godaveri and the Krishna (or Kistna), is the largest independent state in India, and its capital of the same name the

largest native city, "an Indian Damascus or Cairo", inhabited by some 450,000 people, among whom fierce Moslem swash-bucklers strut domineeringly, but are held in restraint by our strong cantonment at Secunderabad, a few miles off. Near the city of Hyderabad a high crag is crowned by the gloomy fortress and ruinous town, Golconda, once the capital, famed as a market rather than a mine of diamonds, in future more likely to thrive through mines of iron and salt. The hilly Deccan shows many a high-perched fortress that now may be allowed to fall into picturesque ruin; and often its rocky ridges have been weather-worn into the shape of castles and temples. In the northern corner of the state, not far from Aurangabad, where the memory of Aurangzebe's conquest is pre-

served by sumptuous monuments, as well as by the city's name, are the amazing temples of Ellora, representing various phases of Indian faith, Buddhist, Brahman, and Jain, whose votaries have in turn excavated and carved the solid rock with a labour equal, it has been calculated, to that spent on the Pyramids of Egypt.

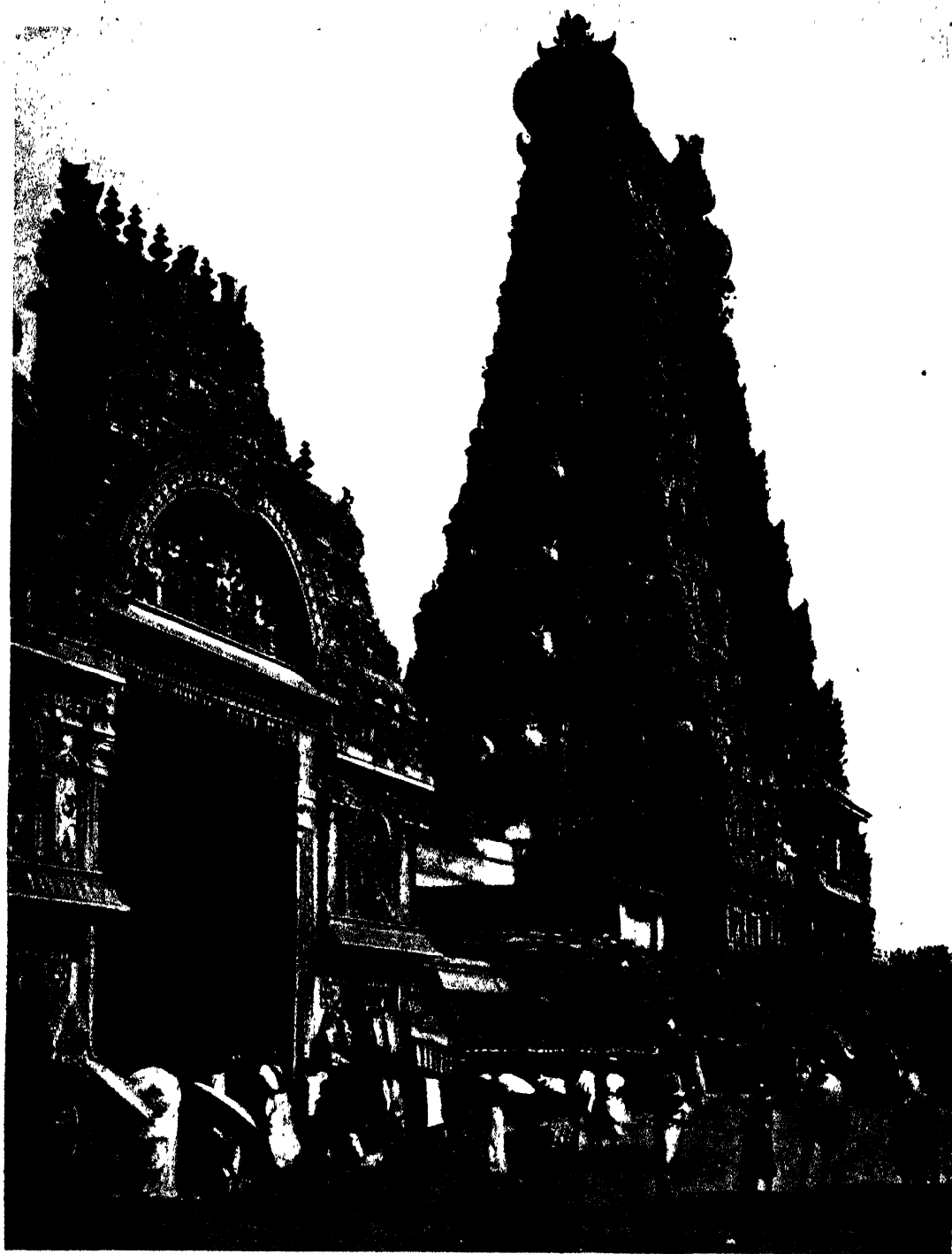
Mysore is another large protected state, with its capital of the same name, not far from the older one, Seringapatam, where after much ado we overthrew the tyrant Tippoo Sahib, who had inherited this dominion from his father Hyder Ali, a Moslem soldier of fortune. The English head-quarters are at an enclave beside the city of Bangalore, now, after Madras, the most populous place (160,000) of South India; and, standing 3000 feet high, it has one of the best climates in the peninsula, so that here among apples and strawberries our soldiers find themselves not so outlandishly exiled. This state contains gold-mines worked by British companies. Coorg, on the south-west side, is a small state rich in virgin forests, that, with those of Mysore, begin to be cleared for coffee plantations. Lying between the Western and the Eastern Ghauts, the Mysore plateau roughens into grand highland scenery, with for one notable sight the finest waterfall in India, that of Gersoppa (over 800 feet), where the Sharawati River plunges down a steep edge of the west side. Another lion of the Mysore hills is what seems one of the largest idols in the world, a statue 60 feet high, cut out of live rock.

The Madras lowland territory stretches beyond the Neilgherry Hills, with their lofty sanatorium Ootacamund, then up the Malabar coast, where are the ports, Mangalore, a centre of missionary effort, and Calicut, still the largest city on this coast, the origin of *calico*, and the goal of Vasco da Gama's momentous voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, 1498. The southern strip of the Malabar coast is taken up by the native states of Cochin and Travancore, with their tropical vegetation and beautiful scenery. Here, about the finest of Hindu temples, Christianity strikes some root.

There is a thriving Protestant mission at Tinneveli, below the Cardamom range which separates Travancore from the plains of the Carnatic. A Malabar forest region is still a fastness of the Moplahs, that fiercely fanatical Moslem people, come into recent note by a sanguinary revolt.

Round Cape Comorin the Carnatic extends along the surf-bound Coromandel coast. Inland, on this side, are cities of old renown: Madura, once the capital of South India; Trichinopoli, in its rich garden land; Vellore and Arcot, where Clive turned the tide of conquest in favour of his country; Bellary, near the vast ruins of a Hindu capital—all overshadowed now by Madras, which in Clive's day could not defend itself against the French.

To the south of Madras is Pondicherry, where 100 square miles or so remain to France as a monument of that short struggle in which her Clive and Hastings were so ill-backed by their country. This, along with Chandernagore on the Hoogly and other small factories on the coast, lets France still count some quarter of a million subjects in India, while Portugal has about twice as many, and the early Dutch and Danish settlements have wholly vanished. One French factory is at Masulipatam, between the Krishna and Godaveri deltas, which was ruined about forty years ago, when 30,000 of its inhabitants perished by a destructive cyclone. To the north of the Godaveri is the anchorage of Vizagapatam, an ancient city that has also suffered from the sea, but retains its fame for ivory and silver work. Some way north there is a better haven at Bimlipatam, which may be expected to grow into prosperity now that a railway runs along the Madras coast to Calcutta. Another reviving port of the Circars, as this district is called, is Kalingapatam, which seems to have the safest anchorage for over a hundred leagues. All this side of India feels the want of good harbours against the surf lashed on its flat coast across the Bay of Bengal. Thus we come round again to the Hoogly delta, whence the heart of our rule has pulsed to every corner of the continent



Madura : the principal Gopura of the great Temple

Nine ornamental pyramids (*gopuras*), of which the largest is 152 feet high, surround the temple. They are adorned with a bewildering mass of carved figures and symbolic ornament, all coloured and gilded. The temple is consecrated to Siva.

## ADMINISTRATION

It is difficult in a short space to describe the system of English government as hitherto in force, especially as some details of administration differ in the separate presidencies. The unit of organization is the "District" perhaps containing a million souls, its "Station" being the head-quarters of an officer, whose title of collector recalls the old days when the raising of revenue was the main part of his duty, but who now may have to exercise both executive and judicial functions, as well as those relating to the important question of land assessment, by which taxes are collected either directly from the cultivator or indirectly through a landlord whose original status was that of a tax-gatherer under the native prince. There is also an independent machinery of judges, who in the lower ranks and sometimes in the higher are natives. Half a dozen districts will be grouped as a "Division" under a commissioner; and a further aggregation of divisions will make a chief commissionership. Limited as it is by control of the central government, felt in an embarrassing use of correspondence and red tape, the power of these officials is very real, and much depends on their own initiative and force of character. Many a quiet old gentleman who spends the evening of his days playing whist and grumbling over the east wind, at Cheltenham or Bournemouth, has ruled with almost kingly authority over a country equal in area and population to a European kingdom. There is no legal barrier to a native's advancement in this honourable service, and of late it has been the official policy to encourage such advancement; but however able to pass examinations, the gifted Oriental is apt to be found wanting in those qualities of temper, moderation, and sense of fairness that eminently belong to an English gentleman. While the great majority of our officials are sons of the soil, it has been still exceptional for men not of British birth to hold the highest posts in that hierarchy of administration styled the Indian Civil Service. In

our time, however, distinguished Indian gentlemen came to be invited into the councils of government, a tendency that will gain an impetus from the recent legislation treated at the end of this chapter.

The covenanted civil service, whatever it may have been in the past, is now recognized on all hands as unimpeachable for honesty, ability, and good intentions. The weak point of its working is the extent to which it must depend upon inferior native officials and police, who are not to be depended on except for trying to corrupt justice after the manner of the East. A clear-headed magistrate, even after long knowledge of a people who love litigation as a game to be played with all help of perjury and bribery, may be hard put to it in sifting out truth from falsehood in an impenetrable mass of contradictory testimony, and often must make a shot at the rights of the matter as perplexed by obsequiously voluble suitors, skilled in arts that would shock our Chaffanbrasses and Buzfuzes. There is indeed something in the evenness of English justice not congenial to Oriental ideas. A native saw aptly compares the British rule to a level highway, whereas "in the raj of the rajahs there were holes and hills". The present generation forgets what this rule really was; but perhaps our childlike subjects would rather take the risk of being cruelly executed or fleeced at the pleasure of a tyrant whose visitations were rare, than bear the regular pressure of such burdens as we have laid on India.

But if we have failed to gain the goodwill of these people there can be no doubt of their respect, won largely by a quality which among them is as rare as with well-conditioned Englishmen it seems a matter of course. No native trusts another as he trusts the bare word of a sahib. Our truthfulness, our evident desire to be fair, our moral as well as physical courage, form the prestige that makes a single unarmed Briton master among a million of vassals.

Even a scowling Mahratta or Mussulman, who cannot forget how his forefathers once were tyrants here, is impressed by the authority of a sahib who can no more be bribed than bullied, and shows himself as straightforward as difficult to deceive. This strong and sound temper of human nature is the best support for the heavy charge thrown on our Government, which over a great part of India has to be at once landlord and tribune of the people, tax-gatherer and almoner, judge and advocate, defender and keeper of the peace.

Our Indian satraps, if they sometimes feel a little astray in the jungle of indigenous customs, through which our legal codification has opened doubtful highways, may take full credit to themselves for improvement in means of intercourse. This ought to be known at home, now that a trip through the Suez Canal is made easier than it was to cross the Alps a century ago. Travelling in India has been at least not expensive, though one reason given for that grudge against the globe-trotter, already alluded to, is that he helps to raise prices and wages. The chief drawback for him may be a want of accommodation on the European standard, though here one need seldom take the risks of adventurous travel. The official or sportsman has the advantage of moving about with his camp and followers. The proverbial Anglo-Indian hospitality has naturally been worn a little thin by more frequent invasion of strangers. The native *serais*, providing only shelter, like our old English "cold harbours", are out of the question for Europeans; and not every globe-trotter is accredited to the sumptuous but uncomfortable entertainment of rajahs or other rich natives, who may not eat with him, still less introduce him to their families. The *dāk-bungalows*, kept up on the roads by Government, are not always satisfactory to a fastidious traveller, who sometimes finds himself reduced to sleep in the mosquito-haunted refreshment-rooms of a railway station. Comfortable boarding-houses flourish in Calcutta; and here and elsewhere the English clubs are the best quarters for single men privileged to make use of

them. The hotels in large towns are seldom good, for want of European management, but as the number of guests increases some improvement may be hoped for in supplying their needs after a business-like manner, instead of leaving them exposed to the crowd of useless menials, hangers-on, pedlars, touts, and promiscuous candidates for backshish, allowed to swarm round the stranger like flies in lieu of more efficient attendance. Much depends upon the servant or servants, without whom a sahib can hardly make his way; and the choice of a "boy" is a point on which the globe-trotter must take experienced counsel. Even with the liberal pay which such a temporary courier expects, and the extra profits he finds means to make out of his master, he proves a cheap enough appendage. At Calcutta a good servant might be hired for half a rupee a day, and less for a lasting engagement; on the other side of India wages are higher. But here, as elsewhere, the War has given an upward jerk to prices.

Everything is cheap, according to our standards, so long as commodities of the country are concerned, seeming all the more so from the long depreciation of silver, making a sovereign go so far. The rupee, nominally worth 2s., had formerly a fixed exchangeable value of 1s. 4d., so that each of its 16 *annas* was practically a penny; but it has lately risen to an unstable rate. Europeans will not much concern themselves with the further division into *pice* and *pies*, still less with the minute shell money that sometimes passes among the natives. The lordly sahib, indeed, scarcely troubles himself to carry coin, pencilling a *chit* that may be presented for payment later on, and leaving the settlement of petty accounts to his servants. Fifteen rupees make a gold mohur, like our guinea, a denomination rather than a coin, which here also fixed a fee for English physicians. Gold, when put into circulation, has been found to disappear into the hands of hoarders or jewellers. In accounts Rs. 100,000 figure as a *lac*, and 100 lacs as a *crore*, the possessor of which is an Indian



## The World of To-day

millionaire. In dealing with large sums it is usual to count by tens of rupees. Bank notes for 5 rupees and upwards are used. The public debt of India looks high on paper, but before the war five-sixths or so of this sum had been spent on railways, irrigation, and other services that more than pay their cost.

There are at present over 36,000 miles of railway in India, connecting the chief cities and ports. The most important line is that which for military reasons has been pushed from Calcutta beyond Lahore to the distant north-western frontier. Allahabad is the junction of a line to Bombay, which by another line through Gujrat and Rajputana has direct communication with Delhi. From Lahore a line goes down the Indus to Kurrachee, with a military branch beyond Quetta to the edge of Afghan territory, and another branch now being pushed towards Persia. Madras is connected with Bombay and with Calcutta; then from Madras lines run southwards both to the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. It may well be that the laying of railways over a flat plain proves an easier matter than keeping them supplied with fuel and water. The chief difficulty often is found in bridging ground liable to inundation, which may have to be overcome by solid embankments and viaducts a mile or two long. In the hills the steepness of gradients has called forth some fine feats of engineering, as in that line mounting from Bombay to Poona by turns so sharp that at one point there is nothing for it but to reverse the direction of the train. A broad and a narrow gauge may require a change of carriage, as on the route from Bombay to Delhi.

The fares on these lines are low, first class costing about as much as third in England. The first-class carriages, according to the exigencies of the climate and of long journeys, are constructed as spacious saloons, with movable upper berths, to accommodate four passengers at a pinch, each compartment supplied with a lavatory, perhaps with a shower-bath, with double-roofs, sun-blinds, tatties, and other appliances for keeping out heat and dust, to

which the passenger adds for himself comforts in the way of bedding, wraps, baskets, bottles, ice, or what not, that need a good deal of room. It is said that on certain lines coffins are carried in case of death from heat apoplexy! Carriages will be reserved for ladies and for Europeans. The right sahib thinks it a hardship to travel second class, still more in the cheaper "intermediate", and of course keeps clear of the compartments where natives huddle together in their own manner. The Hindu takes very kindly to railway travelling, except in its punctuality; and stations are seen littered by the bedding of would-be passengers who have turned up on the platform to wait their chance of a train that may not be due till next morning, then perhaps lose it after spending hours in an attempt to beat down the price of a ticket. Time is not money in the East.

Good roads have been made all over the populous districts, and even into the hills, where required by military considerations. On these is kept up a *dāk* (posting) service by means of *gharries*, *tongas*, or other bone-shaking vehicles, drawn by half-broken *tats*, which can go a smart pace when their heads are turned towards the stable, or if the driver's palm be duly oiled by backshish. Sometimes the roads lead perilously along the unfenced edge of cliffs, and unruly horses will not behave more quietly if a leopard should spring out on them from the woods; but fear of such risks is much matter of habit, and one has known a lady, used to this kind of travelling, who could hardly embolden herself to take a hansom-cab through London.

Many of the native nobles, notably the Rajput princes, share our English taste for horseflesh; and those *tattoos*, or country ponies, as well as finer Eastern breeds, are outweighed by the big "Walers" now freely introduced from Australia. To keep at least a pony is almost a necessity for the sahib. In towns, sumptuously equipped and attended carriages are a point of dignity with both races, where *tikka-gharries* can be hired at low fares, arranged through an inevitable dispute with the driver. The



An Indian Ekka

The ekka is a primitive two-wheeled vehicle, chiefly constructed of bamboo, and is drawn by a single horse or pony. It is used by natives only.

ordinary native delights to ride on an *ekka*, a sort of miniature Irish car meant for one, but often packed with half a dozen passengers clinging on beneath its gaudy curtains. In the "districts", or, as we should say, in the country, creaking bullock-wagons and carts are much used even by Englishmen, where the hard-worked ox is not only put to plough but laden with packs. The buffalo also is worked for draught and loads, or sometimes as a steed. In the mountains even goats and sheep are pressed into service as beasts of burden. The sulky camel does much transport work in the northwest, as does, all over India, the patient elephant, though mounted rather for show than for practical use. The native *palanquins* and other litters are in some places supplemented by the Japanese rickshaw, in which the unseasoned European feels a little ashamed to let himself be drawn as in a

perambulator; but in the East nobody cares to walk who can afford to ride or be carried. Among the hills there is a system of *corvée*, by which the villagers have to shoulder on a traveller and his baggage at a fixed charge. Cycles and motor-cars make novel activity in Indian travel.

The canal system is in part used for transit as well as irrigation; and backwaters and lagoons on the coast have been adapted as serviceable waterways. Steamers ply on the lower reaches of the great river courses, which can be navigated higher up by suitable craft; but in most cases the flow of Indian streams is too irregular and their channel too impeded or too shifting to let them be highroads of commerce. In the sluggish deltas, where inundations will naturally be more common, embankments are needed rather than canals. These great public works, if not its most picturesque

features, are among our best boons to India, and do honour to the service in charge of them.

There is a good and cheap postal service, the postage to any part of the Indian empire, doubled since the War, having formerly been half an anna, or a pice (farthing) for a post card. In its money-order system the Indian Post Office might give lessons to our own. A noticeable fact here is the free use of embossed envelopes, for the posting of letters by servants, in whose hands stamps might prove too adhesive. India has more than 80,000 miles of telegraph lines, affording a sometimes disastrous gymnasium for monkeys and a perch for beautifully-coloured birds.

Mention has already been made of our Government's activity in education, with the best intentions but less satisfactory results. A main point is learning English, that goes to stimulate the spirit of unrest, by which our pro-consuls have been sorely tried in the last generation, when a section of the people to whom we had taught the language without the spirit of free government, began to raise noisy complaints of grievances, more and more loudly vented in the annual Congress that made an unrecognized parliament for Indian sore-heads. Such discontent throve chiefly in the towns and among the one per cent or so of natives as yet educated in English; the cultivators of the soil, who make two-thirds of India's population, seemed more patient under any mastership that can secure them the fruits of their industry. Descendants of the fierce Mahrattas, indeed, once the terror of more peaceful neighbours, have all along had a special grudge against our rule, which has also manifested itself largely among the unwarlike natives of Bengal. The attempt on the life of a Viceroy was a signal instance of how in several regions, seditious writings, bomb throwing, assassinations of officials, called for special provision of summary justice, the severity of which acted apparently as a provocation to fanatical martyrs. A safer action of resentment has been shown in the boycotting of British goods. The agitation is

most marked among the class of baboos who, having gone through an English education in the hope of gaining offices or appointments far too few for the number of candidates, often find themselves at a loss for employment, and turn to pettifogging law practice, inflaming journalism, or secret hatching of treason. A less humane government would be in little danger from a flabby class of traitors more versed in words than in deeds, yet spreading mischief by prate of political rights quite exotic in the East, not without encouragement from cantankerous and ignorant agitators at home.

Disloyalty, at first loudest among those least fit to make doughty rebels, became more disquieting when it spread among our manlier subjects, as in the Punjab, where a serious conspiracy called for numerous sentences to death and transportation. A special provocation here was the harsh reception given by Canada to Sikh immigrants. Our less exclusive tropical colonies, by the way, have hitherto welcomed cheap and patient coolie labour to fill the void left by the abolition of negro slavery; but the abuses of this system became so crying that the Indian Government put a stop to the supply of indentured serfs. Indians can now emigrate only to colonies where they may enjoy their rights as British subjects, a restriction little likely to increase well-being and content among a population always pressing upon its means of subsistence.

The smoke from Japanese battle-fields no doubt helped to darken the cloud that has arisen between us and our Indian subjects. Whether their disloyalty be silently increasing or diminishing made matter of question; it is so difficult for Europeans to read the native mind, that some of those closest in touch with it were most taken by surprise on the outbreak of the great Mutiny. For a time it seemed as if that cloud had been clearing away. The King-Emperor's visit to his Eastern dominion, and the gorgeous ceremony of his enthronement at Delhi, were well calculated to appeal to Oriental loyalty. Since then both princes and people, on whose disaffection our enemy had counted, came readily forward on our

side in the war of nations; and for the first time Indian sowars and sepoys shed their blood for Britain on European as well as Asian battle-fields. Fellowship in a righteous cause should breed warmer sympathy between brothers in arms; yet also the expense of the war, adding to India's burdens, and the rise in prices that at home also bred seditious agitation, gave fresh cause of grievance to talkers not called on to risk their skins for a sovereignty that, among more than three hundred millions, keeps the peace with an army of under 300,000, hardly a third of them Europeans.

Perhaps English education has been the most efficient agent in wafting to the East such aspirations after nationality as for a century have been waxing strong in Europe, spread thence by politicians at home who took their shibboleths to be of world-wide virtue. Such shibboleths have been readily learned by the new class of Indian demagogues, whose education puffs them up with a good conceit of themselves, souring into sullen rancour when they fail to gain coveted posts for which they are ill-qualified by a command of glib phraseology. But they ask for what they do not understand. India has to go to our language to find a word for nationality. There are at least half a dozen nations of Hindustan, cut off from each other by barriers of speech, creed, and caste, with our supremacy as their best bond of union. From time immemorial they have been governed by the strong hand, democracy having but such rudimentary organs as the *punchayat*, a village or corporation jury of five, the number which here seems satisfactory as our round dozen. The governments overlaid by our *Raj* had ruled by the sword, often by cruel tyranny. So the excited cry of Indian patriots that this vast land should be treated forthwith as a nation capable of working out its own welfare, belongs to a world of dreams. British rule makes the one title to nationality for incoherent masses, full of hot animosities, the great majority ignorant, broken in to any yoke of the stronger, wanting in sense of public spirit or duty, and slaves to one or other base misbelief, while

the educated minority too often have little to boast of but a veneer over their inheritance of superstitious prejudices and inbred cunning. There are many nobler minds in India; but the day seems far off when they can be taken as representatives of a united nation. So much is apparent to the more thoughtful natives, if not to grandiloquent agitators; and those with much to lose may well ask themselves what life or property would be worth to banya or baboo on the day when the last British bayonet left Bombay. Sir Rabindranath Tagore, the most eloquent voice of Hinduism, even denounces schemes for political upheaval, insisting on religious and social reform as his people's most pressing need, apparently in hope that India may yet work out her own salvation by such looking to cloud-land rather than to earth as has in the past availed to put her under the domination of more practically-minded and coarser-fibred strangers.

In the face of so great difficulties, we have now taken up the titanic task of nursing in India some sense of national life. For long our Government has been awake to those restless stirrings, for which it sought to provide a safety-valve in calling native notables more freely into its councils, and encouraging the growth of municipal or other management of local affairs. A people cannot be called slavishly oppressed to whose sons are open the highest seats in courts of justice and many posts of trust in the administration, where, indeed, the majority of cases, civil and criminal, are brought before native magistrates. Our officials would be but too well pleased to have more Indian colleagues, could worthy ones be oftener found among a race poor in the qualities by which we have won respect and obedience. Indian candidates for office pass verbal examinations more readily than they can acquire the character which is the backbone of our domination; then Hindu and Moslem, who will look up to a white sahib, must fret under a superiority of one with whom religion and blood have set them at hereditary feud. The present writer once drove a discontented

native employee of Government into a corner of his half-expressed grievances: were he the master, what was the first reform he would ordain? His answer was: "Give more power to all officials, and especially to native officials." That is just what our Government cannot safely do. But all its care to secure equal justice has not satisfied raw demagogues, whose appetite for untried liberty grows on what they treat as mere sops thrown out to their demands.

Both these demands and the desire to appease them came to be quickened by the dynamic commotion of the War, letting loose through half our world such winds of revolt and change. Magnified reports of German victories, along with the mismanagement and checked success of our mainly Indian invasion of Mesopotamia, went for a moment to lower the prestige of British arms. German and Bolshevik incitements, as well as intrigues on our Afghan frontier, are believed to have been at work among the ignorant peoples of Hindostan, where Moslem fanaticism was provoked by the humiliation of the Turkish sultan's caliphate. Disturbances broke out at more than one point, threatening to swell beyond the riots of city *budmashes*, the hooligans of India, or the frequent quarrels between venerated and slaughterers of sacred animals. In the spring of 1919, besides an outburst of street fighting in Calcutta, there was a serious insurrection among the Sikhs of the Punjab, whom, hitherto, we had taken for our most loyal subjects after they had offered the most virile opposition to our conquest.

The spasm of revolt here came to a head in the sacred city of Amritsar, which for three days was in the hands of a plundering, burning, and murdering mob. Brigadier-General Dyer, coming to restore order, proclaimed martial law and forbade the street gatherings that had bred such outrages. In defiance or ignorance of this prohibition, there assembled before his small force a great crowd, chiefly of unarmed people, to some extent, it is said, drawn together by mere idle curiosity, but seething with the

elements of fresh disorder. Upon this mob, when it refused to disperse, the general opened fire without warning, and kept on for ten minutes, shooting into the now panic-stricken mass, till nearly four hundred of them were killed on the spot. The populace being thus awed to submission, he inflicted somewhat indiscriminately humiliating punishments, such as flogging and making natives crawl through a street in which our people had been injured or insulted. These strong measures of retaliation were so intelligible to a population long kept in respect by unscrupulous force, that the revolt at once died down, and advocates of General Dyer claim that he thus nipped in the bud a second Mutiny; it is even asserted that he gained a certain veneration among the Sikhs themselves by the impressing arguments he had brought to bear upon their contumacy. But also a clamour arose against his severity as overdone, a clamour echoed loudly in Britain when the facts leaked out there: it was the story of Governor Eyre over again, raising a dispute with much to be said on both sides. A commission appointed in India to report on this exhibition of masterfulness did not agree, the minority of native members denouncing Dyer's action as "inhuman and un-British", while the European majority took a more indulgent view of his difficult situation, yet did not acquit him of having needlessly prolonged the blood-letting that had effectually cut short a contagious fever. The officer, for whom some of his comrades would rather have voted grateful reward, was relieved of his command by our Indian authorities; and this judgment came to be emphatically endorsed by Mr. Montagu, Secretary for India in our Coalition Government, whose plans of reform unfortunately coincided with disturbances that, to the native mind, may seem to have extorted them by fear.

This Jewish minister had shown marked sympathy with Indian aspirations towards self-government, and before the end of the War he visited India to consult with the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, as to how far a relaxation of our autocracy could be safely



A general View of Simla, among the Himalayas, the summer Head-quarters of the Indian Government

and practically carried out. The result was his bill for the better government of India, passed unanimously by Parliament, if not so generally approved by experienced officials, who have no confidence in the popular voting prescribed as panacea for our political ailments, and not to be readily understood by the mass of our dusky subjects.

The act provides a dual government for India, certain functions being still trusted to the dominant executive power, others handed over to the administration of provincial governors' councils and legislative assemblies with a majority of members elected by the people, this decentralizing system to be cautiously set on foot so as to bring about, it is hoped, a gradual development of local self-government. Along with a general Legislative Assembly, mainly of elected members, there is at the central seat of authority a Council of State as upper

chamber, also a Chamber of Princes, which seems designed as an ornament rather than working gear of the machinery, a main-spring of which will still be the Viceroy's Executive Council, enlarged and more open to native members. Local finances are to be partly controlled by the provincial governments, a due proportion going to the central administration of general public services. The experiment of elections is to be carried out tentatively and gradually, first in the chief provinces. It is calculated that some five millions of voters will at once be enfranchised; and it is hoped by degrees to school the whole people to a sense of responsibility that may warrant the executive powers of government being more fully transferred to their representatives. India is to be represented in England by an official answering to the High Commissioners of our Colonial dominions; and

a standing committee of both Houses is expected to quicken the parliamentary indifference hitherto too much shown towards Indian affairs. Another concession is the admission of approved Indian cadets to our military academy, that on equal terms they may qualify for commissions. A number of the most important offices are still expressly reserved for the Indian Civil Service.

At the beginning of 1920 a Royal Proclamation announced what it might justly call a new epoch in Indian history, to be inaugurated at the Prince of Wales' visit later in the year, but this being postponed, the Duke of Connaught took his place in the ceremony at Delhi. To celebrate it fitly, the king urged his Viceroy to grant a generous amnesty for the many political offenders, who in recent years have been seeking to snatch at liberty by disorderly means. It is for all honest and enlightened Indian patriots to give hearty help in working out the proposed attempt; and all Britons must join in their sovereign's prayer that thus "India may be led to greater prosperity and contentment, and may grow to the fullness of political freedom".

It is too soon to predict how this elaborate system will work, that has been styled dyarchy, from its dovetailing of functions. Though some of the new legislative bodies have tackled earnestly to their duties, there are ominous signs that the experiment may be slow to fulfil the promises of its promoters. Of forty-six seats on one provincial Council, only some third part were contested, and for several no candidates came forward; in some cases only ten per cent of the electors voted. So far from being appeased, the extreme Nationalists urged their countrymen to keep aloof from the polls, more loudly than ever demanding nothing short of *swaraj*, an independent Home Rule, with which is often coupled bold talk of an Indian Republic. Gandhi, the leader of this movement, was allowed to excite the natives by incendiary orations that

have given him dangerous influence. This firebrand allied his fury to that of Moslem zealots, who found special cause for indignation in the humbling of the European Caliphate. On the Sikhs also the leaven of religious fanaticism has been working; and when two hundred pilgrims were massacred by rival sectaries, the agitators tried to lay the blame on our Government. Among the ignorant masses came to be circulated such rumours as that our magistrates had orders to kidnap children for sacrifice. Students, who ought to know better, have banded themselves to boycott their colleges. Perhaps the most active cause of discontent is the War's legacy in a rise of prices and the heavier burden of taxation pressing upon all classes. The Eurasian working-men have been quick to catch the trades-union spirit of Europe now affecting also cheap native labour; and, as with us, reckless strikes have gone to multiply distress by paralysing enterprise and fettering industry.

Among such waves of disloyalty our Government has to steer with a firm hand and a wary eye, backed by more prudent patriots able to appreciate the benefits it has bestowed on India, and to recognize the violence of its enemies as treason to civilization. Its benevolent design was well summed up by Lord Sinha, the first Indian to become a British peer and minister, who moved the second reading of the Governments of India Bill in the House of Lords:

"The problem can be simply stated—it is to give a measure of control to representative Assemblies in India over the policy and actions of the Government, and to give it in such a way that the control can be gradually increased as and when those to whom it is entrusted exhibit their fitness for an increase, but in such a way that each increase comes by an ordered and controllable process, and not *per saltum*, so that throughout the process may be one of evolution, and neither in its first stage nor at any subsequent stage one of revolution".

## INDIAN CITIES

Numerous as they may look on a map, the great cities of India are few in proportion to the population. Some of them straggle over an undue extent of ground, originally a group of villages run together, interspersed with fields and the enclosures of enormous palaces where Dives has the hovels of Lazarus close packed in thousands at his gates. Narrow lanes wind through the masses of humble dwellings; a high shady street, enclosed by gates, may form the chief bazaar or shopping quarter, where patient artificers are seen at work near the stalls heaped with their handiwork; then there are wide openings round tanks or fountains or by the river banks, at which every morning thousands of dusky figures gather to go through their ablutions, tooth-cleaning and hair-dressing also being done in public.<sup>1</sup> High above such a hive of humble industries a prominent feature will often be the huge citadel, at once fort and palace of its old lords, which crowns a rocky height overlooking the city, and outside its walls perhaps appear the far-spread ruins that tell a tale of former greatness wasted by plunder or decay, or of the whim of some tyrant who could shift his capital by capricious decree. The Oriental, indeed, is more ready to rebuild than to repair his often flimsy architecture; and, from the sanitary point of view, the removal of a city's site might well prove an advantage. Then, within a few miles of human life in myriads, the ground may be choked by a rank jungle sheltering fierce fangs and poisonous germs of death.

<sup>1</sup> "Still, as ever," Sir Edwin Arnold found in his *India Revisited*, "the motley population lives its accustomed life in the public gaze, doing a thousand things in the roadway, in the gutter, or in the little open shop, which the European performs inside his closed abode. The unclad merchant posts up his account of pice and annas with a reed upon long rolls of paper under the eyes of all the world. The barber shaves his customer, and sets right his ears, nostrils, and fingers on the side-walk. The shampooer cracks the joints and grinds the muscles of his clients wherever they happen to meet together. The Guru drones out his Sanskrit shlokas to the little class of

If the city be an English station, our "cantonments" are like to have been placed two or three miles outside, or even farther. Here round the dusty *maidan* stand the "lines" of huts in which our sepoys and sowars live with their families; the barracks of the European troops; the bungalows of the officers and officials, each in its "compound" with its straggling show of garden, often represented by a few flower-pots stuck into the dry ground; the English church that looks so exotic in this land of mosques and temples; the English club, and perhaps, in strong contrast to the picturesque donjon-keeps of native sovereignty, a modern fort's business-like entrenchments, where the community may take refuge if ever the scenes of the Mutiny come to be re-enacted. About this settlement has sprung up a "sudder" bazaar amid a squalid quarter for the many camp-followers and hangers-on of our soldiery. Some enterprising Parsee or Eurasian may have opened a European shop or hotel; and whatever cannot be bought on the spot comes from stores in the large cities, shopping at a distance being facilitated by postal arrangements for payment on delivery.

Though we thus hold ourselves aloof from native life, our influence has to some extent set its stamp on the more prosperous cities, where tramways run jingling through widened streets and large open markets make a motley show of commodities, among which the sewing-machines of the West appear beside the tinselled fabrics of the East. To see Indian life in its characteristic

brown-eyed Brahman boys; the bansula-player pipes; the sitar-singer twangs his wires; worshippers stand with clasped palms before the images of Rama and Parvati, or deck the Lingam with votive flowers; the beggars squat in the sun, rocking themselves to and fro to the monotonous cry of 'Dhurrum'; the bheesties go about with water-skins sprinkling the dust; the bhanga-coolies trot with balanced bamboos; the slim, bare-limbed Indian girls glide along with baskets full of chupatties or 'bratties' of cow-dung on their heads, and with small naked babies astride upon their hips."



## The World of To-day

aspect one must go out into the villages, each so like another that our eyes can hardly make out any difference except of size. Each has its cluster of huts, surrounded perhaps by a mud wall or a hedge of prickly cactus or bamboo; its shaded tank, where the cattle gather to be watered morning and evening, or its deep well, descended into by a flight of steps; its temple of clumsy idols; its village green; its ancient tree, round which the old men sit smoking their hookahs in the cool of the evening, exchanging gossip or listening to the stories of which they are as fond as any children. Each of the inhabitants is what his father was before him—husbandman, smith, shoemaker, potter, barber, scavenger, or the like—and he has no thought of rising in the world, knows of little beyond the fields familiar to him from his mother's arms. His time, when not given to sleep or chat, is passed in the tasks to which he was born; and so, from generation to generation, life goes on as it has done for a thousand years.

The three chief cities of India owe their renown, indeed their very existence, to our domination. "We", says Sir W. W. Hunter, "make our appearance in the long list of races who have ruled that splendid empire, not as temple-builders like the Hindus, nor as palace and tomb-builders like the Mussulmans, nor as fort-builders like the Mahrattas, nor as church-builders like the Portuguese, but in the more commonplace capacity of town-builders, as a nation that had the talent for selecting sites on which great commercial cities would grow up and who have in this way created a new industrial life for the Indian people."

Calcutta, which gets its name from a shrine of the cruel goddess Kali, and at one time earned from its unhealthiness the nickname of Golgotha, marks the swampy site of three native villages, now lost in the homes of a million people. The white and yellow fronts of Chowringhee, morally if not physically the West End of this "City of Palaces", look across its park to the Hoogly, bordered by the luxuriant Eden Gardens and the spacious enclosure of Fort William, the citadel commanding the river,

farther down which are the celebrated Botanical Gardens. On the *Maidan* has arisen, as memorial to Queen Victoria, a marble palace which will make a National Gallery for India. From the top of this open space, by Government House, with its dome and columned façade, one passes into a quarter of public offices, institutions, shops, churches, and other buildings, where Dalhousie Square, with its lake, is the pride of Calcutta. But for the motley population it might sometimes be easy to forget that one is in the East. Even English policemen are seen on the pavement, the native guardians of the peace not being bold enough to deal with a drunken British sailor. Yet there is some hint of Oriental habits and needs that distinguishes these solid buildings from Bloomsbury; and no want of Oriental colour appears in the crowded buildings of the Black Town, opened up as they are by the Circular Road and other avenues. In the centre of the city are the docks, alive with vessels, from the stately P. & O. liner to the hooded Ganges boat, all thickly packed against the bank whose height makes it a quay. For miles the city stretches up the Hoogly, past the pontoon bridge which lead to its manufacturing suburb of Howrah on the right bank. Above this is the burning ghaut, where may be seen the grisly spectacle of dark corpses half-hidden in the smoke of crackling pyres, to be flung into the river that often bears down the loathsome bodies of men and animals swirling on its turbid flood. This sight seems a little more lugubrious *memento mori* than Christian cemeteries here, whose mouldering monuments combine Oriental hugeness with the ugliness of Georgian days. Miles and miles still the buildings extend up this busy flood, fringing away into scattered villas, temples, and gardens. About a dozen miles above comes the station of Barrackpore, where the Viceroy has a leafy Windsor.

From Calcutta to the sea is nearly 100 miles of tortuously-difficult navigation, to be undertaken only in daylight under the guidance of a well-trained and well-paid staff of English pilots, Diamond Harbour



On the Hoogly River at Calcutta: liners and Ganges boats

making a half-way anchorage. This gives Calcutta the advantage of being unassailable by a hostile fleet. But its position as a port has been so much subverted by the Suez Canal that it became a question whether the capital of India should not be transferred to some more healthy and central situation, as might have long ago been done if the vice-regal court had not Simla to take refuge in during the hot season. The sacred city of Allahabad had been suggested, as a central knot of railways; also such elevated stations as Poona on the side of the Western Ghats, and other places had their claims put forward; while, strong in the possession of expensive public buildings, Calcutta was naturally unwilling to give up a rank it gained rather by accident than by

merit. But when for the first time a British sovereign visited India, after his coronation, to hold a great Durbar at Delhi, King George V there announced the transference of our capital to that historic city, near which a new seat of government is being built.

Bombay, now the nearest great port to England, as well as chief seat of the cotton trade, bids fair to become the most thriving city of India, threatening to surpass Calcutta in population, before the outbreak of plague gave its growth a check that may be only temporary. This fine city, that came to us as dowry of Charles II's Portuguese bride, stands on a low, narrow island connected by causeways with the larger one of Salsette, and that again with the mainland, so as to form a point locking in the bay,

dotted with other islands, where all the world's navies might lie in the best harbour of India. The town mainly occupies the point, open on both sides to the sea and the breezes that temper its relaxing and equably warm climate. The extreme end is the narrow reef called Kolaba, above which the name of the fort marks the first European settlement. Landing here at the Apollo Bunder, one passes by a long line of handsome public buildings into a business quarter where, but for the trees that adorn it, one might sometimes believe oneself in Manchester or Liverpool; and thence by the Esplanade and along the Maidan to a railway station which is one of the largest and architecturally perhaps the finest in the world. Then comes the inevitable contrast of the native quarter, where Oriental glow and tawdriness mingle to make the picture one expects under a dazzling sun, though again Lancashire will be suggested by a regiment of tall chimney-stacks befouling the cloudless sky<sup>1</sup>. Beyond the native town is Byculla, an older English quarter; on this other side, round Back Bay, projects Malabar Hill, covered with choice mansions and villas among which is the residence of the Governor; and above the ridge stand up those mournful Towers of Silence, in a garden bristling with thorny trees upon which the vultures cannot settle for their loathsome repast at Parsee funerals.

Bombay has long been head-quarters of the Parsees, who thrive here amain. Some of their merchant princes have palatial residences in the city, about which busy cotton mills testify to an enterprise not admired by Lancashire. Among the worthies of this

body, a statue records the generosity and public spirit of Jamsetji N. Tata, who built here the Taj Mahal Hotel, the most magnificent in India. The family firm is still distinguished by the same munificence, his sons Sir Dorab and the late Sir Ratan Tata having voluntarily offered 30 lacs of rupees which their father had intended for the Scientific Research Institution now open at Bangalore. They have also carried out his great scheme for forming artificial lakes on the Ghauts, in which the monsoon floods, formerly running to waste, are dammed up to be used in generating electric power for Bombay's mills and tramways, an engineering achievement that rivals the barrages of the Nile. Another prosperous enterprise of this family is the working of a rich iron-field in Chota Nagpore, where the model city named after its founder Jamshedpur, 150 miles from Calcutta, is arising with a fair prospect to become the Sheffield or Pittsburg of India, and has already over 50,000 people. The sons followed their father's example in liberal use of the wealth thus increased, a quality, indeed, characteristic of the whole Parsee community, whose history was ably written by Dorabhai Framji Karaka, chief police magistrate of Bombay.

Bombay is more expensive to live in than Calcutta; its contracted site makes house-rent so dear that some Europeans are content to pitch tents for themselves on the sea-shore, where evening breezes temper the damp heat. If their climate is rather relaxing, the Bombay people are lucky in being easily able to escape it. A zigzagged railway carries them 2000 feet up the Ghauts

<sup>1</sup> "The decoration of Bombay henceforth is its people," as Mr. G. W. Stevens aptly says. "Under the quaint sun-hoods that push out over the serried windows of the lodging-houses, along the rickety, paintless balconies and verandas, over the tottering roofs, only the shabbiness of the dusty and dirty plaster relieves the gorgeousness of one of the most astounding collections of human animals in the world. Forty languages, it is said, are habitually spoken in its bazaars. . . . Every race has its own costume, so that the streets of Bombay are a tulip-garden of vermilion turbans and crimson, orange and flame-colour, of men in blue and brown and emerald waistcoats, women in cherry-coloured drawers, or mantles drawn from the head across

the bosom to the hip, of blazing purple, or green, that shines like a grasshopper. You must go to India to see such dyes. They are the very children of the sun, and seem to shine with an unreflected radiance of their own. If you check your eye and ask your mind for the master-colour in the crowd, it is white—white bordered with brown or fawn or amber legs. But when you forget that and let the eye go again, the scarlets and yellows and shining greens—each hue alive and quivering passionately like the tropical sun at mid-day—fill and dazzle it anew: in the gliding light the very arms and legs show like bronze or amber or the bloom on ripe damsons. You are walking in a flaming sunset and come out of it blinking."



Johnston &amp; Hoffmann

Bombay: a view in the native quarter

to Poona, the chief military station of the presidency, once the capital of the Maharrattas, whose last Peishwa, from the temple-crowned rock in its lake, saw his army scattered by our troops. Matheran is another hill station among grand mountain and forest scenery. In the early summer, before the rains drive them away, the Governor and his social and official train make their quarters at Mahabaleshwar, with its bungalows of red laterite near a sacred temple marking the source of the Krishna and other rivers, where wooded points look down almost 5000 feet upon a labyrinth of jagged crags, cliffs, and jungles falling to the Konkan, beyond which shines the distant sea. Among these hills, also, is the rock-fortress of Pertabgarh, cradle of the Mahratta dominion. On one of the islands near Bombay are the famous cave temples of Elephanta, goal of many a steam-

launch trip; others hardly less notable may be visited on Salsette; and most ancient and wonderful, but more out of the way, are the Buddhist rock sculptures at Karli, high up on the Ghauts.

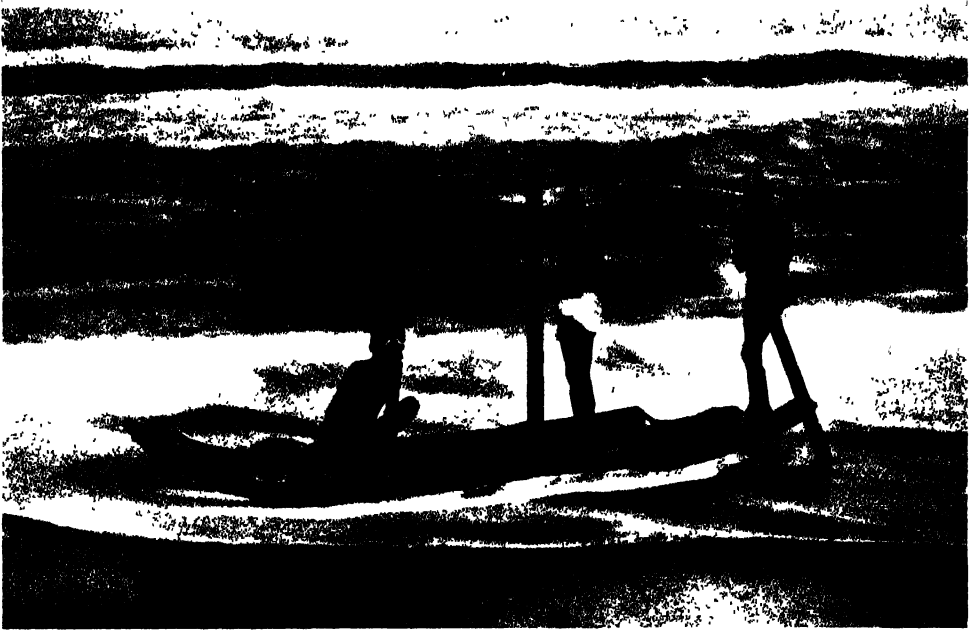
Madras, though the oldest of the three presidency capitals, has not kept pace in prosperity with Calcutta or Bombay. It has the disadvantage of a surf-bound coast, so that travellers had long to land by the exciting and risky experience of shooting through the curling waves on a catamaran; and the making of a harbour, not to speak of its maintenance against violent cyclones, has proved no easy matter. The city, with about half the population of Calcutta, has for its nucleus Fort St. George, and extends for miles along a low shore whose rich vegetation sets off the dazzling whiteness of the buildings, spread over a great area by open spaces, reservoirs, and lagoons, so

## The World of To-day

as to seem a city of suburbs. Among the public buildings is the Observatory, that gives the standard time to India, and makes the base of its Trigonometrical Survey. Some miles to the south are the heights of Mount St. Thomas, where this apostle traditionally tenanted a hermitage, and the Governor has his residence; then, farther

meter does not rise so high as in drier districts, the damp heat is most oppressive, and welcome comes the relief of the sea-breeze, whose rising may strangely affect even the eye, as described by Basil Hall:

"The whole landscape appeared to have given way, like molten silver under the heat, and to be moving past more like a troubled stream



Catamaran, Madras Coast

A catamaran consists of three stout logs bound together, and is propelled by paddle or sail. The use of these primitive native craft is due to the surf-bound conditions of the Coromandel coast

south, on the coast, come the famous cave temples and pagodas of Mahabalipore. In the vicinity are other notable monuments of Hindu devotion, here free from Moslem encroachment. It has been remarked that early missionary publications gave us the scenery of Madras, with its palm-groves and rice-fields, as our typical conception of India; and the Madrassese, under their hot sun, are sensibly darker than the more mixed races of the north. If the thermo-

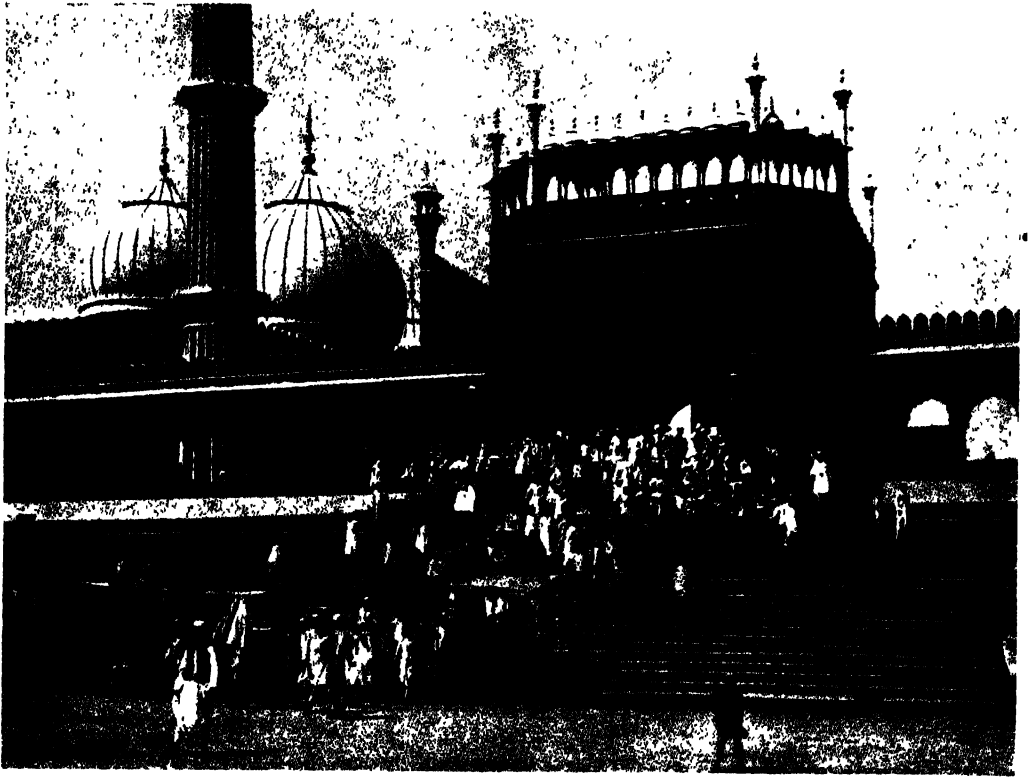
than the solid ground. The trees and shrubs, seen under a variety of refractions through differently heated strata of air, seemed all in violent motion, though probably not one leaf of the highest coco-nut tree, nor a blade of the lowest grass stirred in reality. The buildings in the distance looked as if their foundations had been removed, while the shattered and broken walls danced to and fro, as if under the influence of some magical principles of attraction and repulsion; whilst many patches of imaginary water—the celebrated mirage of

the desert—floating where no water could have existed, mocked our sight in this fantastic landscape."

From such hot cities and from the sun-baked plains every Englishman who can and many who must, if they would live, make a welcome summer change to the "hills"—modest name for altitudes doubling the height of any English mountain—on which health-stations have been established for each presidency. On the face of the Himalayas there is a line of such sanatoriums at a height of 5000 to 8000 feet, mostly within the bounds of small feudatory states. The chief ones are Darjeeling, under 400 miles from Calcutta by rail; Naini Tal, with its lake, a refuge for officials of lowland provinces; Mussoori farther west, beside the military station of Landour; then beyond Simla, the Punjab's breathing-place, Muree, above Rawal Pindi. Simla is the *doyen* of these, as retreat of the vice-regal court in summer, and this Brighton, Baden-Baden, Braemar of India has now grown into a collection of villas, chalets, hotels, and other buildings dotted for miles about its Mall, on fir-clad slopes where every level site has to be cut out, and the roads are mainly steep paths on which lazy Europeans get themselves carried up and down in hammocks or chair-litters, as their forefathers in sedans. A great deal of gaiety goes on here in the season, in spite of the mist and rain that make waterproofs a frequent wear. The scenery is described as being in spring not unlike that of the Scottish Highlands, with *khuds* of red earth for heather braes, deodars for firs, and flaming rhododendron trees for rowans. Later on any such resemblance is drowned in a wealth of foliage and flowering, when one sees trees wreathed to the top with creepers and festooned with scented roses, red, white, and yellow; yet among strange blooms appear homely fern, moss, and brambles, the clematis and jessamine, the violets and windflowers that have such sweet memories to English exiles; and dahlias escaped from their gardens run wild here like weeds. The characteristic

tree is the deodar, a cedar that in the forests behind Simla is found growing to a height of 200 feet, and measuring 30 or 40 feet round its gnarled stem. Pines also are common, and the dark Indian oak, beneath which the slopes clothe themselves with stunted lilac acacia, or after rain with a carpet of velvety-green. Glorious are the views—on one side over a maze of foothills to the great yellow plain vanishing in a haze of heat, on the other to the line of snowy cloud-wrapped peaks from which come the great Indian rivers.

Among the native cities of India a few may be sketched as representative. First in interest to men of every race is Delhi, seat of the Moguls, surrounded by ruins of more ancient cities and by famous monuments of art and devotion, on the edge of the Paniput plain where empire has more than once been lost and won. Hitherto included in the Punjab administration, now that it becomes the imperial capital the territory about it has been formed into an independent commissionership, with a peculiar status, like the federal district of Washington. Our new official city is laid out some miles outside of the compact mass of buildings enclosed by a high red sandstone wall with heavy bastions and deep gates, in circuit over half a dozen miles. On the bank of the Jumna stands the fort, an inner fortified citadel, which till the Mutiny was the emperor's residence. Tommy Atkins now tramps thoughtlessly by its two famous halls, the great cloister of red sandstone pillars where the Mogul sat enthroned before a mosaic of jewel work; while his dazzling Peacock Throne, that wonder of the eastern world, reputed as worth millions of pounds, stood in the smaller Divan whose marble walls, richly gilded, lacquered, and inlaid, display the proud inscription: "If on earth there be a paradise, it is this!" The beautiful Pearl Mosque of pure marble, and the sultan's marble baths still remain to attest the magnificence of that fallen house. Over the centre of the city rises the Great Mosque, said to be the largest in the world, a domed and towered square of red sandstone and



Delhi: the steps of the Jama Masjid or Great Mosque

Johnston & Hoffmann

This is said to be the largest mosque in the world. Inside the whole pavement, walls, and ceiling are lined with white marble.

white marble upon an elevated platform reached by forty gigantic steps. Its chief beauty is in its gateways and arches; but since the Mutiny the great gate has been closed as a punishment, and the central quadrangle, giving room for a myriad congregation, lies open to the curious Englishman, whose profane shoes may tread its black and white chequered pavement, among the scowls of believers impotent to resent the conqueror's intrusion. Not far off the *Chandnee Chouk*, "Silver Street", makes the main thoroughfare running across Delhi, where East and West appear strangely jumbled in the shops that offer globe-trotters a gorgeous choice of souvenirs.

But the English visitor will first turn to a quarter beyond the walls, passing out by the post-office and the site of that

arsenal, at the outbreak of the Mutiny defended by nine men against an army, for sultry hours, till they had no help but to blow it up and fly, only half of them living to wear the Victoria Crosses so well earned; then through the Cashmere Gate, at which another handful of brave men gave their lives to force open the road of the avengers. Across a mile of plain, now covered again with groves and gardens, is reached that low ridge on which, all through the heat and rains of summer, a few thousand pestilence-stricken men, themselves besieged rather than besiegers, encamped against Delhi, swarming with fanatical foes ten times their own number, but never gave ground till they had stormed their way over its walls and through its narrow crooked lanes—strain of heroic deeds com-

memorated by a tall red monument that from this height looks proudly down on the domes and minarets of the city.

A longer excursion is out by the Lahore Gate, past the spot where Hodson, so moved by bloodthirsty madness or strange fear, shot the princes of Delhi dead with his own hand; past that sumptuous mausoleum, a fortress as well as a tomb, whence, earlier in the day, backed by only a hundred troopers, he had dragged out the trembling fugitives from among thousands of men, who laid down their arms at the bidding of the haughty sahib as if he had an army at his back; on over leagues of crumbling or buried ruins, and by countless tombs and shrines, to a group of Moslem arches and Hindoo colonnades, above which tapers into the air the Kutub Minar, king of towers, of which Mr. Val Prinsep, the artist, who did not so much admire the world-famed Taj, says—but not with the assent of all beholders: “Nowhere have I seen so perfect a work. Ring or belt after belt of delicate tracery, interwoven with texts of the Koran, rise to the height of 250 feet; while the whole is a beautiful reddish colour, slightly mottled, not by time, but intentionally.” From this point there is a wide view over what another describer calls a million of acres of “green-and-brown chess-board, dead flat on every side”, with the “sheeny ribbon of the Jumna” as its only natural feature.

More than 100 miles down the Jumna is Agra, also a favourite city of the Moguls. This, too, has its great Mosque, and its palace citadel whose high red walls, a mile and a half in circuit, enclose another vast gathering of Arabian Nights’ wonders mingled with the gimcrack trumpery of Oriental splendour and the practical signs of British rule—a bewildering labyrinth of gateways, galleries, pavilions, domes, towers, vaults, dungeons, barracks, arsenals, arcades, baths, fountains, gardens, and glittering divans, among them such architectural treasures as the Justice Hall of Akbar, the exquisite Pearl Mosque of alabaster-like marble veined with delicate tints, and the Zenana Pavilion whose walls seem cut out of ivory.

From the balconies of this palace may be seen, on the river bank about a mile off, the Taj Mahal, so often extolled as the most lovely work of human hands. Some critics may shake their heads over the elaborate ornamentation that has fixed on those Mogul monument-makers the charge of having “built like Titans and finished like jewellers”; but such a mass of so noble material in that sunny scene could hardly fail to strike Fadladeen himself with admiration. Erected by Shah Jehan as a tomb for his favourite wife, in the seventeenth century, this “tender elegy in marble” is believed, in part at least, to have been the work of Italian or French architects in the emperor’s service; and it is said to have employed 20,000 workmen for more than a score of years. It stands within a verdant flowery garden, itself a wonder under that scorching sky, traversed by a canal of crystal water and sparkling with fountains among thickets of dark foliage. Entering by a noble red gateway, one sees this blooming vista closed by the snowy splendours of the Taj, a pile of pure marble based upon marble terraces, crowned by a cluster of domes and flanked by graceful minarets, beyond which extend the wings of a mosque. The central dome, over the lofty doorway, is more than 200 feet high. Under this the walls of the mausoleum are lined with a lavishment of delicate mosaic workmanship and richest materials, flowers and birds represented in precious stones, which may well be compared to a “jewelled garden”. Verses from the Koran also are inlaid within and without, the whole sacred volume, it is said, being inscribed on this stupendous building. After being dazzled by the magnificence of the exterior, one is awed by the “subtle shadow and chastened light” that reign within, where in the centre a screen of trellised stone, carved like delicate lace, encloses the dimly-lit tomb, or rather monument, for it is in a vault below that the emperor and his wife lie side by side. The story goes that he had designed to build for himself a similar monumental pile on the other side of the Jumna, to be joined to the Taj Mahal by a marble bridge; but



the potentate who could afford thus to mourn his wife at an expense of millions, came to be dethroned by his own son and cruelly confined in the citadel, where his only comfort was gazing upon his costly creation, which in this case indeed might be called "a sorrow's crown of sorrow".

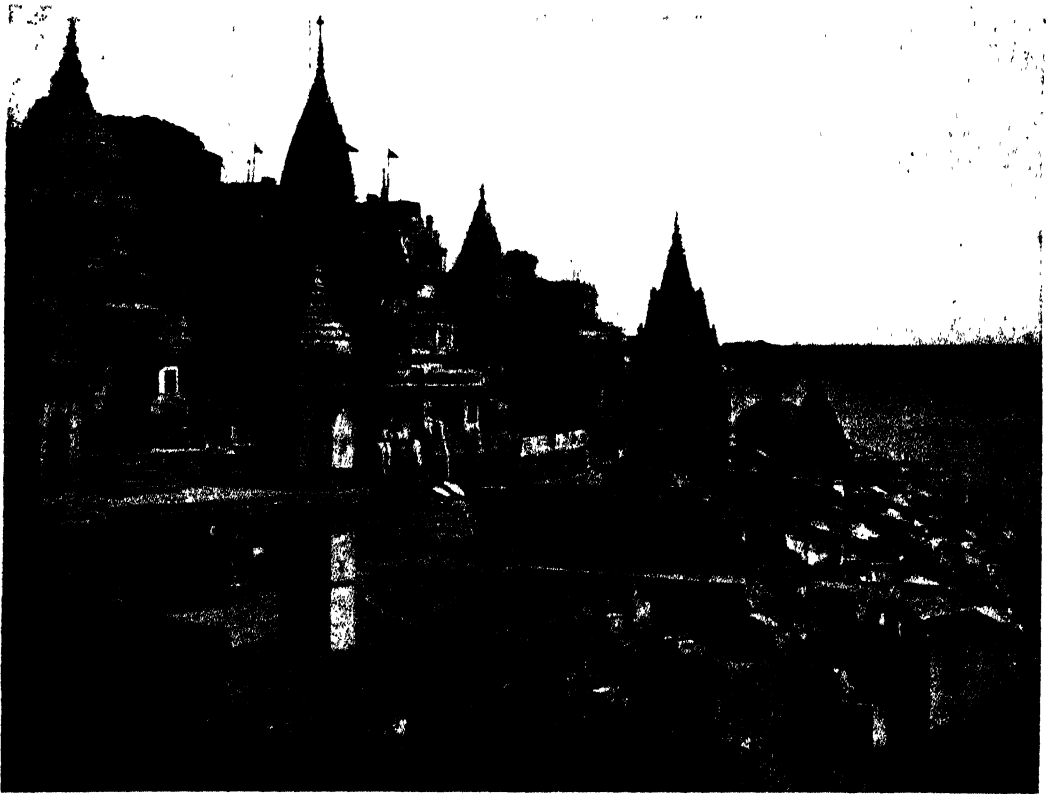
It is by moonlight that the Taj reveals all its beauty to enchanted strangers. "In the warm sunlight", well says Miss Gordon Cumming, "it seems to cut clear and sharp against the blue, like a glittering iceberg. In the moonlight it is still dazzling, but seems as though newly buried beneath a deep fresh fall of snow, lying lightly on domes and pavements and minarets, and rising above the tall cypresses and dark rich mass of foliage like some strange vision of purity. You can scarcely believe that it is real—you hold your breath lest you should awaken and find that the beautiful picture was but a dream."

A few miles off, at Secundra—a name that often in India preserves the memory of Alexander the Great—is the tomb of Akbar, "grand and massive like his fort, a huge red pile of the same dark red sandstone", as the above-quoted author describes it, "built in four huge terraces narrowing as they ascend", to culminate in a mass of white marble domes, large enough to have lodged a regiment of horse, within which a gloomy vault enshrines the emperor's sarcophagus. A similar feast for sightseers is at Futteypore Sikri, more than 20 miles away, where ruin has been allowed to creep over the adjuncts of another magnificent palace and mosque of Akbar, which appear like a city crowning the height that here rises from the plain. Among its wonders is a court paved with black and white squares, on which, with living pieces, was played a game like chess; there are also signs of less edifying imperial diversions. This tolerant prince, among his wives, had a Christian lady, to whom may be due the Arabic text inscribed over one gateway: "Jesus has said the world is but a bridge over which you must pass, but must not linger to build your dwelling"—strange reflection among elaborate structures, pro-

fusely adorned within by all the costly arts of sculpture, inlaying, and colouring.

On the Jumna, between Agra and Delhi, adjoin each other the sacred Hindu cities of Muttra and Bindrabund, which Miss Gordon Cumming describes as "crowded with fine specimens of native architecture, beautiful bathing-ghauts of red sandstone, and innumerable temples, both ancient and modern, of most intricate design. . . . Bindrabund owns one, especially beautiful, of white marble, with noble monolithic pillars and many statues, which are the favourite seats of the monkeys." But the most famed goal of Hindu devotion is Benares, on the Ganges below its confluence with the Jumna, at once the Oxford and the Mecca of Hindustan, where, among colleges and palaces of wealthy devotees, the sacred shrines are counted by hundreds, almost by thousands, most of them Brahminical, but there are many mosques. Some Christian churches have planted themselves in the thick of the shrines of heathendom, and at least one Buddhist temple revives the memory of the faith that once rose here as from a grain of mustard seed to spread its branches over half Asia. A few miles without the city are the ruins of the Benares of Buddhist days, when it bore the same holy character. Now it makes a crescent of three miles along the high bank of the Ganges, here broad as the Rhine at Cologne, its population of over 200,000, a tenth of them priests, swollen by the myriads of pilgrims who flock from all parts of India, trusting to deserve heaven by the very act of bathing in this most sacred reach of the sacred river; and still more sure seems the title of being burned on its banks, or choked to death by its mud.

A strange spectacle to European eyes, nor altogether a pleasant experience for other senses, is presented by the narrow, crooked, lofty streets, or rather alleys, overhung by fantastically carved and painted shrines, almost bridged by balconies, awnings, and verandas, the obscure passages below crowded by pilgrims of all classes, from gaily-attired princes with their swaggering henchmen to repulsive fakirs clothed



Benares, the Metropolis of Hinduism: temples near the Burning Ghat

in dust and ashes, the way sometimes blocked by sacred kine, flower-garlanded and daubed with paint, that roam at will, the living idols of the place, among common beasts of burden. Through jostling obstruction, by the bazaar stalls loaded with that brass work for which Benares is famed, and by such tables of the money-changers as crowd the approach to an Eastern temple, amid a din of tom-toms, a babel of lowing, grunting, praying, and chattering, followed by a tail of the beggars who here swarm like flies, the critical tourist pushes his way, wonderingly to survey the spots that so work on human minds—the Golden Temple, the Monkey Temple, the Cow Temple, where his servant, hitherto a model of impassive respectfulness, suspected of being a Gallio to all creeds, may amaze him by suddenly tearing off shoes and head-

dress and rushing forward to fling himself, in an uncontrollable rapture of devotion, before some foul fetish, while the master is glad to turn back, holding his nose and picking his steps among filth and garbage on the ground which millions worship. Thence, by high pavilions displaying crude paintings of tigers, griffins, elephant-headed gods and other monstrosities, he descends to the Ghauts, the terraced steps facing the river, where the sickening smoulder and crackle of burned corpses may soon drive him away from the lively sight of thousands of bathers fringing the muddy stream. A fine view over the city is to be had from the slender minarets of Aurangzebe's mosque that dominates Hindu temples, as a mark of Moslem conquest. But the best way of seeing Benares is from a boat on the river, slowly passing before that panorama of

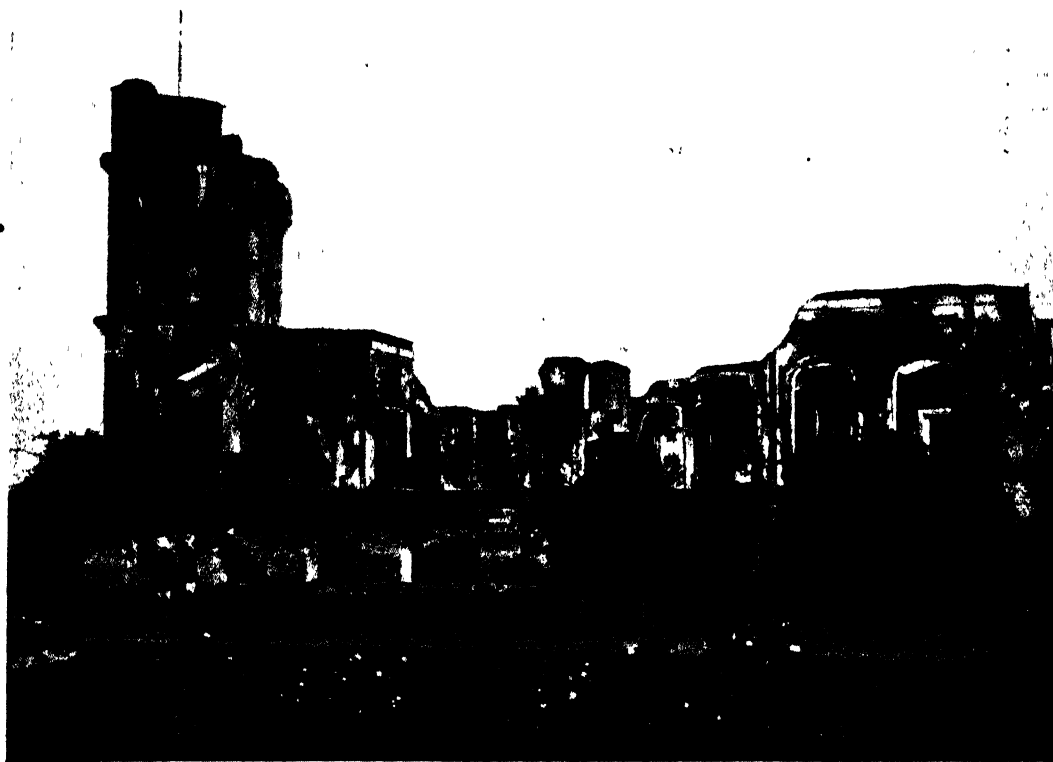
devotion, so often described—"one unbroken bank of pinnacles, shrines, pillared mandirs, chaityas, pilgrim-houses, towers, sacred trees, images, altars, and flights of spacious steps", with a railway bridge now making incongruous intrusion on "the most Indian scene in India".

Our Government has not ventured to put down this "Holy Fair", over which sanitary authorities find much reason to shake their heads, for the concourse of pilgrims to the sacred slums of Benares is the means of carrying infection over India and fostering germs of cholera and smallpox, that, as from Mecca, may travel to Western lands. Below Calcutta, at Pooree on the Orissa coast, is the renowned shrine of Juggernaut (Jagannath), a name very familiar to us from exaggerated missionary reports. Here assemble some hundred thousand pilgrims at once, to tug at the car of a deity whose rites in truth would be held profaned by the shedding of a single drop of blood; and it is more than doubtful if any victim ever perished under its wheels unless by accident or suicidal insanity. Yet such are the conditions of so reckless a gathering in the rainy season, when devout multitudes, chiefly of women, are for days exposed without shelter, almost without food, among the filth of their ignorance and poverty, where cholera and fever greedily feed upon starvation, that the annual loss by death following this one festival has been counted by thousands, sometimes by tens of thousands, an appalling sacrifice in honour of that Hindu god who bears the title of "All Preserver". Sanitary measures enforced by our authorities now avail to reduce the death-rate from such hot-beds of infection.

Another great gathering-place is at Allahabad, of late losing its sanctity in native eyes, which seems a pity, since the spit of land where the Ganges and the Jumna join made a camping-ground from which the unwholesome leavings of the pilgrims would be washed away in the rains. Higher up, where the still bright stream of the Ganges pours down from the mountains, Hardwar, sacred city of Krishna, holds a famous fair

both of religion and business, visited in some years by half a million of people, or even more, a thousand of whom have been crushed to death in an eager press to reach its bathing-places. The Government now paternally regulates this mass of devotion so as to prevent such accidents. And here is the head of the great Ganges canal, that unsurpassed feat of engineering, at which those ignorant folk, if they knew their own blessings, might more gratefully worship than "in the long line of graceful pyramidal spires and domes with porches of pillars rising from hallowed courts". The priests do a thriving trade in bottling and sealing the holy water of the river to be sent all over India as a charm, an unction, and an elixir of life. Miss Gordon Cumming—the title of whose book, *In the Himalayas*, hardly denotes its merit as an excellent account of northern India—tells us of one pretty festival here, when at night the whole town is lit up by lamps, and the Ganges sparkles with floating oracles like the fireflies that spangle the air. "For still, as in the days of Lalla Rookh, the Hindu maids or mothers launch a frail raft, a bamboo, a coco-nut, an earthenware jar, or some other tiny boat, wherein is placed a cluster of lamps. If these burn steadfastly till the boat floats out of sight, all goes well with the loved one. But should the little bark be caught by a sudden gust of wind, or engulfed in the darkness, then the shrinking woman with the sad gentle eyes believes that the blast of adversity will surely overcloud *his* future."

On the Gumti, which falls into the Ganges below Benares, in a rich country that has been called the Garden of India, stands Lucknow, capital of the ex-kingdom of Oudh, now, except the Nizam's Hyderabad, the largest native city in India, with a population of over 260,000, including an unusual proportion of Europeans and Eurasians. This loose gathering of hovels, palaces, and parks, stretched over a circuit of some score of miles, belongs to the later Moslem period, and most of its showy stuccoed structures ill bear examination, imposing as they appear from a distance.



Lucknow: ruins of the Residency, showing Banqueting Hall, Tower, and Flagstaff

But amid them, on a slight eminence in the centre of the city, for a Briton the most moving sight in India should be that trimly-kept garden in which patches of blackened creeper-grown ruin are reverently preserved among clumps of gorgeous Eastern flowers and smooth lawns of turf, here a rarer show than flowers, where idle cannon stand as trophies by the battered walls, and brown-skinned gardeners water the ground once drenched with the blood of those who lie at rest around the white cross uplifted on a flowery mound, their proud and melancholy monument. For this is the Residency, in which for five deadly months our hard-beset countrymen held out behind frail bulwarks, separated only by the breadth of a road from their myriads of fanatical foes, struck down one by one beneath the hourly storm of missiles and the silent pestilence, among them hundreds

of women and children shuddering at the prospect of such a fate that loving husbands swore to shoot their wives dead if it came to the worst rather than let them fall into the hands of the butchers of Cawnpore. Nor was it white men only who there laid down their lives for England—

“Thanks to the kindly dark faces who fought  
with us, faithful and few,  
Fought with the bravest among us, and drove  
them, and smote them, and slew,  
That ever upon the topmost roof our banner  
in India blew!”

Most of the gingerbread palaces of Lucknow, with their gimcrack adornment, are of little interest unless as scenes of that struggle—the central line of what was once a narrow fortified street by which Havelock's Highlanders pressed on against fearful odds, “like a life-boat ploughing its way through

## The World of To-day

a tempestuous sea to the rescue of some sinking ship"; the Bailey Gate, where now stands the monument of "Jock" Aitken, whose sepoy, true to their salt, defended it so well; the gorgeous royal dwellings that were the head-quarters of the mutineers; the fantastic suburban pile of the Martinière, from which Colin Campbell advanced for his less dramatic but more effective relief; the walled garden of the Secunder Bagh where, caught as in a trap, 2000 sepoys were fiercely slaughtered by the avengers of Cawnpore; the site of the Mess House, that last barrier between the garrison and their heroic deliverers, in the assault of which Lord Roberts and Lord Wolseley were foremost; the Dilkoosha Park, where Havelock died on their glorious retreat; the Alum Bagh, where he was buried, and where his generous rival Outram maintained himself all the winter within two miles of the great city, till Lord Clyde led back the largest army we had ever mustered in India, to make a clean sweep of the rebel swarm.

Forty miles of fields and groves separate Lucknow from Cawnpore, a large modern town on the Ganges, noted chiefly for its cantonments and its leather work, but containing another British shrine, consecrated by unspeakable memories. Here, now, the emblems of Christian graces would speak peace to the souls of those whose bodies were flung into that well of horrors, which our kilted warriors reached too late, turning away in passionate tears and curses that were fearfully wreaked both on guilty and innocent. Here, too, the stolidest John Bull must feel a lump rising in his throat as he stands by the site of that poor entrenchment behind which the victims held out so long, or by the stairs where so many were treacherously betrayed to massacre, and the heathen temples saw their sacred river stained with our blood.

Among the most conspicuous structures of Benares is one of the observatories, built here, as near Delhi and elsewhere, by an astronomical maharajah of Jeypore (Jaipur), in the beginning of the eighteenth century. The capital founded by him bears a unique character among Eastern cities, and the

"Paris of India", as it is sometimes called, has become the chief place in Rajputana, much visited by tourists, as it is on the direct line from Bombay to Delhi. Within a high wall Jeypore is laid out in broad straight streets, crossing each other at right angles after the familiar pattern of American cities. The often elaborately ornate house fronts are uniformly coloured with a pink tint that, glowing in the sun, gives the effect of rosy marble, against which fine touches of colour are made by flocks of sheeny pigeons, green parrots, and gorgeous peacocks, as much at home here as sparrows on a London road. These long lines of pink houses, shops, temples, palaces, and pavilions are lit by gas or electricity, and the well-paved streets swept clean by gangs of chained criminals. The main thoroughfare, running through the heart of the city, is a couple of miles long, and nearly 40 yards broad. In the centre rises the Maharajah's huge palace, where, among other wonders, are a magnificent marble hall of audience and the observatory of the learned founder, its instruments constructed of solid stone. There is one building, called "The Hall of the Winds", which Sir Edwin Arnold defies Aladdin's magician to match, "nine stories of rosy masonry and delicate overhanging balconies and latticed windows, soaring with tier after tier of fanciful architecture in a pyramidal form, a very mountain of airy and audacious beauty". Gardens have been laid out that aspire to be the finest in India. A den of man-eating tigers sentenced to lifelong imprisonment is one of the sights of the place, which also has a college, museum, schools, hospitals, alms-houses, and other institutions to show, presenting a rare union of Western and Eastern civilization. But all Oriental are the forts that frown down upon the city from the stony heights around, on one slope of which the word WELCOME in gigantic white letters records the visit of King Edward VII. The "Gumilcund" of a novel called *The Rajah's Heir* is evidently taken from this "magnified toy city".

A few miles out among these rugged hills are the ruins of Ambair, the old



Johnston &amp; Hoffmann

Jeypore, "the Paris of India": a typical business street (Jahari Bazaar)

capital, that under a red sunset offers scenes for the pen of an E. A. Poe or the pencil of a Gustave Doré. Strangers who have obtained permission are slowly jolted up and down the ridge on one of the Maharajah's painted elephants, an Oriental experience that tunes the Western mind to the weird aspect presented by this deserted weed-grown city, in so striking contrast to its populous successor. Above a black, stagnant lake, haunted by snakes and crocodiles, the hillside is half covered by the lofty buildings and grounds of the palace, the top crowned by a fortress that makes a state prison and treasure-house. This palace, kept in good preservation, has the usual Indian combination of sumptuous magnificence and tinselled prettiness. The carved pillars of its great hall had to be covered up with plaster for fear of exciting

the Mogul's jealousy. There is a temple here at which daily a goat or other animal is still offered to the goddess Kali, once only to be appeased by human flesh. Such a lingering rite seems in keeping with the situation and solitude of this silent mass of terraces, halls, courts, pavilions, cloisters, alcoves, and dimly-vaulted chambers, "made more gorgeously gloomy by their carving, gilding, and mirrors", that suggested to Bishop Heber an enchanted castle.

In the "Five Rivers" region is Lahore, another seat of the Moguls, who connected it with Agra by a long avenue, and decorated it also with a profusion of tombs and temples, "where Death seemed to share equal honours with Heaven". Fallen from its greatness for a time, it has now revived as the British capital of the Punjab, its new European quarter spreading it out

for 6 or 7 miles, with a population that now exceeds 200,000. Here again we find among groves and gardens a citadel, a palace, a great mosque, a pearl mosque, and as a later feature the mausoleum of Runjeet Singh, that Sikh despot to whose dominion we succeeded; but along with these buildings are our flourishing university, schools of law, medicine, and art, an Oriental college, a cathedral, a Victoria Jubilee Hall, and a museum that boasts the best collection of Indian antiquities. Nor do such institutions seem so wholly exotic as they might do elsewhere, since in the Punjab, with its manly inhabitants and varied climate, we English more easily make ourselves at home.

A whole volume could easily be filled with the picturesque features of Indian cities; but this might seem a vain repetition of admiring epithets, and it is time to turn away from such a tempting theme. There is Gwalior (also called Laskar), its mass of temples dominated by a mighty rock fortress which bears the name of the Indian Gibraltar, but which in the Mutiny days was broken into by a couple of subalterns and a few sepoys. In the same central region there is Jhansi, with another old stronghold, whose Ranees, that heroic Amazon of the same struggle, was dubbed more of a man than any of the rebels among whom she fell fighting in a trooper's uniform. There is Udaipur in Rajputana, renowned for its picturesque situation and its magnificent palace. There is Ahmedabad, capital of Gujerat, once the largest city in India, like so many others that have risen and fallen, and, like others, this preserves wonders of Hindu and Moslem architecture. There is Surat, which can make the same boast of former greatness, but has sunk to a tenth of its size since the days when it was one of our earliest settlements, and our clerks and soldiers who died here were honoured with sumptuous if not beautiful tombs, to delude the natives into thinking the humblest of us a lordly hero. There is Bijapore, in the Deccan, the "Palmyra of India", whose remains of old magnificence still include the largest dome in the world.

In the south of India, also, there are many marvellous cities, not so much visited as they deserve, because more out of the way of globe-trotting routes. Yet on the railway from Madras to Tinneveli, near the point of the peninsula, lies a group of places which, as guide-books say, would well repay a visit, among them Madura, ancient seat of the cultured Pandyan dynasty,\* to which our King Alfred is believed to have sent an envoy, renovated round an Aladdin's palace, whose genius is said to have been a European; Trichinopoli—a name known in Europe through more than one of its wares—beneath whose picturesque citadel Bishop Heber lies buried near the island on which stands one of the finest of heathen fanes; Tanjore, with the "sublime monstrosities" of its Hindu pagodas. The whole of this region, where stone bulls and horses stand in the fields like calvaries in a Roman Catholic country, abounds in amazing temples, of characteristic pyramidal form, carved and coloured into a crust of lavish ornament that, beside our most elaborate cathedral fronts, would be as the blazing heaven of Hindustan to a temperate English sky. North and south, east and west, the richest monuments of India testify ever to its preoccupation with a supernatural life, while our buildings seem designed to make the best of "this warm, soft earth".

A comprehensive view of Indian architecture might prove too technical to be of general interest; but its main features may be briefly summed up. The earliest monuments, dating from before the Christian era, are the rounded topes, like an inverted bowl, of Buddhist adorers, and their elaborately-carved rock faces and excavations. The Jains also cut out temples in solid rock, enriching them with pillars and towers, and grouping them together on hill tops, as on Mount Aboo. The Hindus were unacquainted with the true arch, but constructed arch-shaped openings by horizontal courses gradually projecting one above the other till they met. To cover large spaces they employed square piers with brackets projecting, one above the other in succession, from the capitals; and

a dome was imitated by cutting off the angles of the ground plan, then successively reducing the angular space on the bracket principle. The characteristic of the Dravidian pagodas in southern India is the form of a storied and truncated pyramid; and elsewhere the towers and gables tend to a conical, or tapering shape, which becomes acutely pointed in the pagodas of Farther India. Where the Mohammedans came they modified Hindu architecture by introduction of their domes, minarets, and the pointed or horse-shoe arch; and their hatred of image; substituted for ornament in relief those flat surfaces inlaid with conventionalized designs, which so strongly contrast with the bold and often grotesque, not to say obscene, sculpture of the Hindus. The open courts, airy pavilions, and shaded verandas of domestic

architecture were no doubt dictated by the climate, and not too fanciful seems an idea suggested to Mr. Andrew Wilson in wild altitudes beyond the sources of the Ganges.

"Gigantic mural precipices, bastions, towers, castles, citadels, and spires rose up thousands of feet in height, mocking, in their immensity and grandeur, the puny efforts of human art, and yet presenting almost all the shapes and effects which our architecture has been able to devise; while, yet higher, the domes of pure white snow and glittering spires of ice far surpassed in perfection, as well as in immensity, all the Moslem musjids and minars. It was passing strange to find the inorganic world thus anticipating, on so gigantic a scale, some of the loftiest efforts of human art, and it is far from unlikely that the builders of the Taj and of the Pearl Mosque at Agra only embodied in marble a dream of the snows of the Himaláya or of the Hindú Kúsh."



Tanjore: the Sacred Bull, made of black granite (weight 80 tons)



## ANIMAL LIFE

One of the cities often visited by English travellers is Baroda, a native capital noted for its Guicowar's new palace, for his gold and silver cannon, for his collection of diamonds, also for a familiarity with wild beasts that sets a timid tourist looking out for the local police. In spring-time some open space may disclose two or three *must* elephants, trumpeting fiercely, lashing their wrinkled hides with their trunks, and straining at the chains by which it seems well that they are bound to trees, else a mad bull would be a safer sight. In the streets one may meet a snake-charmer with his basket of serpents, a *shikarri* leading out a couple of hooded cheetahs for their evening exercise, or a lynx on a leash; but only barking dogs turn round to stare after such a pet. Baroda used to be celebrated for its wild-beast fights, a favourite amusement with Indian princes, whose palaces often contain a sort of enormous cockpit to serve as arena for encounters of tigers, elephants, rhinoceroses, buffaloes, and even rams, easily trained to be bellicose. The present enlightened Guicowar may no longer encourage such spectacles; but he is himself a doughty hunter, and he keeps up a royal "Zoo", in which more than one of the caged tigers are—or a generation ago were—captures made by the English vice-principal of his college; and one of the finest used to be labelled as born in an English Zoological Garden, which seems a clear case of bringing coals to Newcastle.

Many readers think of India first as a home for wild beasts, and get their chief impressions of it from more or less authentic tales of *Shikar*. We have all heard of the Royal Bengal tiger, taking his name and fame from this corner of the world over which his humble relatives abound, down to the domestic pussy-cat. This is, indeed, the royal beast of India, that made a fitter emblem for its cruel despots than the lion. Hyder Ali and his son Tippoo, the tyrants of Mysore, used the tiger as their crest and

its stripe as their livery. At the sack of Seringapatam, there was found among their treasures a grim toy in the shape of a life-sized tiger devouring an Englishman. It could be worked by machinery that gave forth sounds imitating the cries of the victim while he seemed to twist in agony between the beast's jaws. Tippoo kept real tigers as pets, dressed out in green and gold like coddled lap-dogs, and trained to take sweetmeats from his hand; also he had tigers of business, to tear in pieces those that had roused his tyrannous displeasure, an office at other courts often discharged by the elephant.

Most terrible, indeed, is the tiger, whose stripes, in nature's mimicry, so easily blend with the bleached colours of his jungle home. Well might William Blake ask: "Did He who made the lamb make thee?" Beast as well as man go in dread of this neighbour. At his masterful roar the jungle is troubled; the monkeys fly to the tree-tops, chattering down abusive warnings; the birds twitter out their alarm; the deer take to wild flight; the jackal slinks away with a low whine as if recognizing a master in butchery. Trembling cattle and horses turn back from the very smell of such a foe: a horse has been known to rear in alarm at the sight of a stuffed tiger; and the bravest man's heart beats fast before those malignant eyes, glowing green through the jungle dusk. Yet some animals prove a match for him, the elephant for one, and sometimes the buffalo. Herds of villagers' buffaloes are said to form square, as it were, against the attack of a tiger, turning outwards and repelling him with their horny bayonets. Cases of tiger-fights are reported in which a horse got the best of it with his hoofs, and a ram with its horns. Naturally the tiger prefers to prey upon less bellicose animals, such as deer and the humped breed of cows common all over India, revered by all good Hindus but not by this four-footed Siva-worshipper.

Now that zoological gardens and travelling menageries are so common in England, it may not be too much to say that the tiger is a more familiar sight to young John Bull than to most Hindus. In his native wilds he is a creature of retiring disposition, which, as a rule, may be safely depended on, unless accident bring him into society. There is a story of a tiger intruding upon an Indian picnic party, but bounding away in alarm when a lady put up her umbrella as the only weapon at hand. Near Mahabaleshwar, a favourite picnicking spot is the brow of a black precipice, seamed with bands of white grass—the sheer rock said to be 3000 feet deep—at the top of which before breakfast one has seen a tree freshly scratched by a tiger's claws, but none of the party would be troubled by the likelihood of such a guest presenting himself in broad daylight. One Sunday evening, indeed, some of the Governor's band, taking a stroll along the shady avenues, came upon a tiger busy on his "kill", and that was a case for beating a hasty retreat. But when these woods were drawn for the Duke of Connaught, with a small army of beaters at command and all the help of local sportsmanship, it was not for weeks that he got the chance of a shot at a tiger. Captain Forsyth, doughty Nimrod as he was, has to tell us that, after ten years' experience of a very "tigerish" region, he has only thrice seen a tiger, when he was not trying to find one. The tiger is quite as anxious to keep out of man's way as most men are not to go near him, and least of all does he leave his hiding-place when he has reason to suspect that enemies are looking for him. We must consider the extent and population of India in connection with the bill charged against this butcher, which in one recent year adds up to some 900 human lives, and a hundred times as many cattle. *Per contra*, every man's death seems to be avenged on a couple of tigers, so that the hunters on the whole get the best of it. The race of tiger-cats also do much mischief in India, especially leopards, which have a very sweet tooth for dogs, and often venture

to snap them up from the outside of houses. In one way these are more dangerous, as more agile, than tigers, for a leopard or panther can follow its prey up a tree.

It might be expected that nobody had a good word to say for the tiger; but against his general bad name he finds an advocate in G. P. Sanderson, one of the best authorities on wild beasts in India, who is even inclined to hint at this one's being unduly persecuted. Some such ardent sportsmen talk as if game so worthy of their steel ought to be preserved, like foxes or pheasants, and hunted only after the rules of fair play. If sly and treacherous—and no wonder with such a character!—the tiger is at least economical, killing only for food, and making one sufficient victim serve him for three or four meals. Such, at least, appears the practice of a steady sensible tiger, but dissipated youngsters have been seen to strike right and left among a herd, as if for the mere pleasure of slaughter, and they are said to enjoy the sport of snapping up a monkey—when they can catch one—by way of a snack. Mr. Sanderson goes so far as to speak of the common or jungle tiger as "extremely inoffensive", nor without his services to man. He preys chiefly upon wild pigs and deer, which would otherwise do mischief in the fields. The fear of him is as good as a fence to keep cattle from straying too far from their village. If he may help himself to a cow now and then, it is usually an old useless beast which the religious Hindu must not kill, and which only avails to spread disease among the herd.

A tiger does indeed become a nuisance when, perhaps grown fat and lazy, he learns that it is easier to pick up a livelihood by hanging about villages than by hunting the active inhabitants of the jungle. A still lower stage in his road to ruin is if, having overcome an instinctive distrust of his most helpless enemy, he has once tasted human blood and become confirmed in this unnatural taste by the ease by which it can be gratified; some say that the tiger takes to man-eating only when his joints are too stiff and his teeth too bad for other hunting.

At all events, the "man-eater" soon becomes known as a plague to the neighbourhood he infests. The dread of him keeps men from their fields, women from the well; children need no threat of a bogey to pin them to their mother's apron-strings; houses are barricaded where such a hungry guest has been known to tear victims from their own hearths; spots haunted by so real an apparition are shunned; the villagers durst not stir forth unless in bands; and sometimes whole villages are deserted after repeated attacks of what may well be taken for a *Shaitan* in beastly shape. Sometimes, desperately maddened, the bravest men take an oath to avenge their losses, and seek out the monster in his lair, where he will sell his life dearly under their poor weapons. But now, in most parts of India, there is seldom wanting some English officer or hard-worked official who asks for no better recreation than a chance of playing St. George to this dragon. The sahib is sent for; then the village may be at peace for years, when the man-eater's skin lies a trophy in some Bath or Bayswater drawing-room. Yet the deliverer may come not altogether welcome, with his train of swaggering attendants to rob and oppress in his name till the remedy seems almost a choice of two evils; nor do the timid peasants much enjoy being pressed into the service as beaters, by drumming, shouting, and squibbing to make the tiger break cover before the sahib's trusty rifle, or as guards to enclose it in a circle of fires till that champion appears on the scene.

Tiger-hunting may be divided into three kinds. The most exciting is when the noble sportsman meets his foe face to face; but woe to him if his bullet fail to kill or disable the wounded beast! A more practical method, despised by chivalrous hunters, is to lie in wait on a platform in a tree or some other safe place: native shikarris will even fortify themselves in a bamboo cage. This ambush is often fixed within shot of the beast's drinking-place or his "kill". The tiger, having a habit of regularity in meal-times, does its slaughtering upon any feasible occasion, then is pretty sure to

return at sunset for supper off the carcass. Sometimes a kid or other animal will be tied up as live bait, nor do natives, with all their character for humanity, stick at putting a hook through this decoy's ear, and tugging at it with a string to make the poor creature squeak, as best means of getting a bite. It is only Mohammedans and very low-caste Hindus who can take part in hunting, but often these shikarris, with very inferior weapons, show great courage as well as patience and cunning, well paid by the blood-money Government sets on a tiger's head. Trap, pit, poisoned arrow, any help seems fair against such a foe; and sometimes he is driven against nets, to be shot or speared from behind them. The third kind, favoured by Indian princes, who will offer a jungle battue to their honoured guests, is what may be called tiger-hunting in state, on the backs of elephants. A whole fleet of them, each equipped with a battery of deadly rifles, launches forth into the sea of trees and long grass, where perhaps the royal game has been marked down beforehand, with men and elephants standing guard around, and food provided for the destined victim as if he were an English pheasant. The tiger has small chance here, unless a too eager slayer gets the tables turned by being thrown under its jaws from the back of his elephant, which for its part enters into the sport with extraordinary zeal and sagacity, beating the thick cover like a hound, smelling out the scent, trumpeting forth the "find", pointing the retreat of the tiger with its trunk, with which, too, on command, it passes up stones to its driver that he may pelt out the coy game; and, when well trained to trust in its human burden, standing like a rock even though those desperate teeth and claws have fastened into its thick hide, and only if necessary taking a hand in the slaughter by its heavy foot or agile trunk.

Mr. Sanderson, who ought to know, is inclined rather to belittle popular conceptions of the elephant's sagacity; but, even taking a large discount off the stories to this effect, one must respect Jumbo in his



Bourne &amp; Shepherd

"My Lord the Elephant" in the service of Man

native land, where he makes himself at once so ornamental and useful. The chief reproach to be made against his intellect is the ease with which he lets himself be caught and tamed to the service of man. Though made so much at home on Indian plains, he is a wild highlander by birth. Over hilly forest regions elephants roam in huge herds, crashing their way through the thickets, lazily browsing on wild fruits and foliage, now and then holding a picnic on the cultivated border, from which they are scared away by the waving of torches, the blowing of horns, and the beating of tom-toms; and sometimes the exasperated villagers will lay down poison for these huge marauders as for rats. The tusks of the male make him a rich prize for sportsmen, not to speak of the exciting difficulty and danger of bagging such big game, so that Government has had to interfere for his

protection, to save him from the extermination threatening his African kinsmen.

Leaving sport among wild elephants out of sight, let us look at what may be called the civil life of this familiar beast, whose features are so well known in Europe also, his ungainly form, his heavy limbs, his loose-fitting hide, in the wrinkles of which flies give him so much trouble, his great ears and tusks, and the strong but delicate trunk which he can turn to so many purposes, from chastising a peccant brother to picking up a pin. He lives to a great age, over a hundred in many instances, so there were elephants serving us in the Mutiny that might have seen the whole career of our Indian conquest. He does not freely breed in captivity, but should be caught young, sometimes singly by digging a pit for him or slipping a noose round his leg, which he has a trick of idly swinging in

the air; or he is basely beguiled by Delilahs of his own kind, amid whose blandishments this Samson of beasts finds the two-legged Philistines upon him with their ropes. Tamed elephants lend themselves readily to such treacherous work, even showing a certain zeal in it, as the harsh school prefect has been known to wreak on small boys the sufferings of his own juniorhood. In large numbers elephants are driven into a pound or *keddah*, such as is described for us by Masters Sandford and Merton's well-informed tutor; into this they follow their leader like sheep, and begin to suspect that there is something wrong only too late to break through the strong enclosure.

One by one, with the help of the tame kidnappers, who use trunks and tusks freely in counselling submission, the wild ones are separated and tied up. At first the captured monster seems keenly to feel the loss of liberty, and may be seen weeping big tears as he tries in vain to break his unaccustomed bonds. But by and by he grows more resigned, takes a lesson of good behaviour from his tame brethren, is gradually reconciled to his lot, and, like a dog, attaches himself to the human race that has the virtue of feeding him. The rest is a mere matter of time and training. The elephant often comes to show no small affection for his *mahout*, as well as fear for the sharp hook with which this master disciplines him. There are many stories representing their mutual affection, extending also to the mahout's family, like that between a dog and his owners.

The general rule of contended docility must be qualified by exceptions. The most steady and industrious of elephants may prove liable to sulky fits and unexpected outbursts of temper. They have been known to run away after years of captivity, often coming back of their own accord when they find it hard to pick up a living in freedom. The males become subject to periodic sexual excitement, in which they are dangerous to deal with: this state is called *must*. Sometimes an elephant goes mad outright. It is not clearly ascertained what makes a *rogue* ele-

phant, that wanders off, sour and solitary, from a wild herd. Whether out of his wits, or outlawed from his fellows, or disappointed in love, or with some crime on his conscience, the rogue elephant may prove more formidable than a lion or a man-eating tiger if he take to haunting a district and butchering its terrorized inhabitants without provocation, as sometimes happens. In days of elephants playing a part in battle they might prove dangerous allies, when, seized by a panic, they turned tail to trample down their own army. Firearms were a blow to the elephant's prowess as a warrior, the trunk being a tender point where he can be painfully wounded, as the Romans found. Those of us who have seen our Zoo pets meekly, not to say sleepily, letting themselves be petted and fed, would be startled by their vehement motions and angry trumpeting when roused to passion.

Manifold are the uses to which the elephant is put in India. He is most useful as a beast of burden, where, with half a ton on his back, he can force his own road through rank jungles, picking his steps on doubtful ground, trying the strength of bridges before trusting himself on them, climbing steep hills, or sliding down slippery slopes by carefully-chosen zigzags. With his trunk and forehead he can lift or push a gun out of a quagmire; and will scream in indignant rebuke at the sulky bullocks that do not second his efforts by pulling at the right moment. In raising weights he shows wonderful capacity for bringing his huge strength to bear. He will gather his own fodder, handing up sheaves of grass to be stacked on his back. He will uproot trees one by one as ordered, and pile them on each other. His business-like qualities are perhaps best displayed in the teak-yards, where huge logs are stacked by elephant labour with extraordinary neatness, and, if a beam prove too heavy for one to deal with, his mate turns aside to lend him a trunk.

For a native to keep an elephant is much like the setting up of a motor-car with an English gentleman; only very well-to-do

families can take the air on their own elephant. Such ostentation indeed comes expensive. A fine one may cost a thousand pounds or more; and *caveat emptor* must be the buyer's rule, since elephant dealing seems to be as demoralizing as horse dealing. Then, even where food is so cheap, it costs a good deal to keep the big beast supplied with his daily mound of fodder, grass, sugar-cane, or what not, besides occasional treats of fruit, sweets, and spice by way of reward, and the giant doses of medicine he is understood to need pretty often. It takes two men to look after him. The proverbial phrase, "a white elephant", is said to come from a way Indian princes had of sending an elephant to a subject, who was thus politely sentenced to be eaten out of house and home. Moreover, a magnate's elephant should be magnificently equipped, not only with sumptuous caparisons on occasions of state, and a gilded howdah topped by gorgeous canopies, but with a coat of paint in elaborate designs, which may take a day or two to lay on, and is apt to be spoiled by the elephant's habit of throwing water or dust over his head, or beating it with a bush or a wisp of straw, held in his trunk, to drive away the flies. Solomon in all his glory might well have been outshone by a rajah on his elephant of state, this being a natural point of pride with princes. For ordinary locomotion elephants are still used in the rural districts, but in large cities it has been found necessary to forbid or regulate their passage, since the sight and smell of them, as of the camel, prove very disquieting to horses.

In the north-west chiefly, the camel supplants the elephant both as a fleet steed and a beast of heavy burden; in some parts he is harnessed to vehicles, and even put to plough, like the patient bullock that is so hard worked all over India; but if recommended by his hardy endurance, the "oont" has a bad name for temper and other unsociable weaknesses. Mules are said to be gaining favour among the four-footed carriers in our army service; and we learn Mr. Atkins' opinion of their respective merits:

"The 'orse 'e knows above a bit, the bullock 's but a fool,  
The elephant 's a gentleman, the baggage mule 's a mule;  
But the commissariat cam-u-el, when all is said and done,  
'E 's a devil an' a ostrich an' a orphan child in one".

Were the kingdom of beasts a republic, the elephant has surely the best claim to be elected president. That titular king, the lion, has abdicated his sway in India, though he lingers, in a maneless state, on the borders of Gujrat. The rhinoceros, too, is driven back to wild borders. Black bears are common among the hills, and the snow-bear in the Himalayas, where men may sometimes be seen with half their faces torn away by Bruin's claws. There are wild buffaloes in the forests as well as tame ones in the fields. The wild boar that, when pressed, can be as fierce as any tiger, takes the place of the fox in the favourite sport of English horsemen. Reynard in person is not a stranger in India, but wants the sacred caste he bears in England, though here and there packs of foxhounds are kept up. Some of our ideas of the fox as type of cunning seem to be derived, through ancient folk-lore, from the shy and sly jackal, here looked on as hardly worth hunting; but it may often be seen slinking off into cover, and still more often is heard at night raising that dismal howl interpreted *I—smell—-a—dead—Hindu!* to which the rest of the pack give back in sleep-banishing chorus, *Where—where—where?* Wolves are more fierce; a Government report credits them with killing 338 persons in a year. Various kinds of deer and antelope abound, and it is well known how the natives train cheetahs to spring upon such lively game when unhooded like fa'cons and slipped like greyhounds. This creature is a kind of leopard, with some hint of the dog. The dog itself, as all over the East, is not held in such honour as with us, being usually a lean, dirty, sneaking, masterless cur, treated with fine scorn by the high-caste companion of the English sahib, through which, however, some improve-

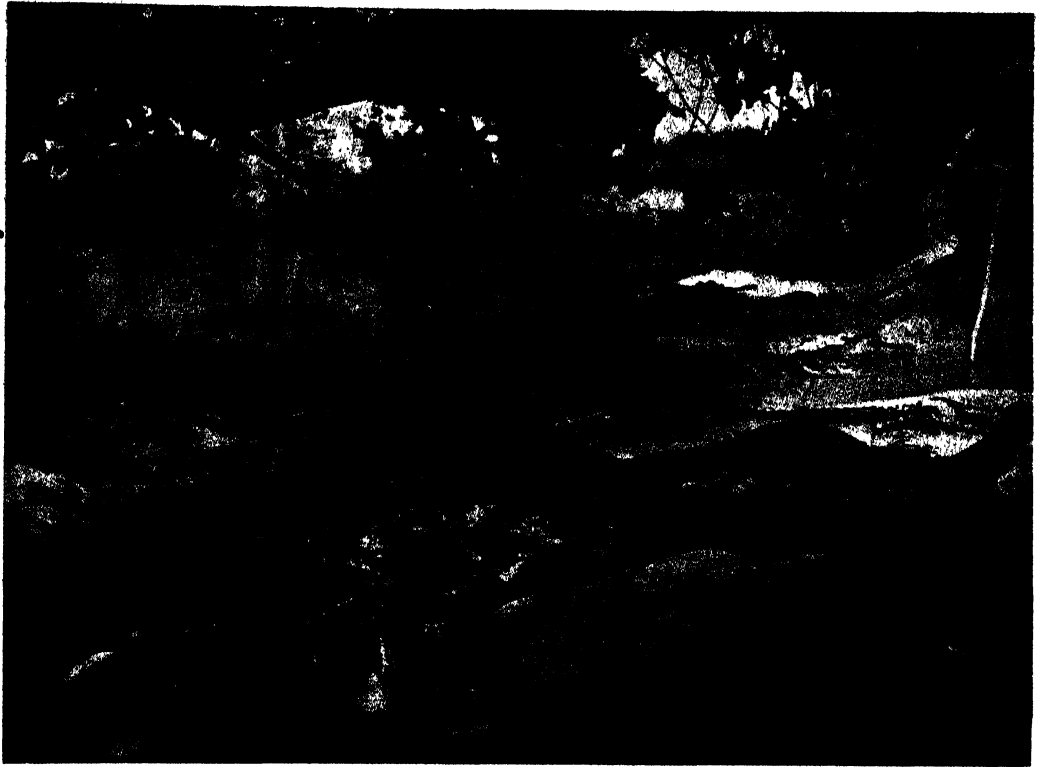
ment may be looked for in the breed and status of the Indian pariah that calls itself a dog and a brother. By the way, Mr. Sanderson declares the British bull-dog a braver beast than any born in India.

Falconry is a favourite native sport. Otters, cormorants, and pelicans are trained to fish in the service of man. Other birds serve him as volunteer scavengers—kites, vultures, and the long-legged cranes nicknamed "adjutants", whose six-foot-high antics so much impressed new-comers to Calcutta before it was drained out of need of such refuse destructors. Beautifully-plumaged birds abound, gorgeous peacocks running wild, iridescent pigeons, noisy green parrots, blue jays, cooing turtle-doves, wailing owls, and many more, protected by Hindu reverence. The natives, however, are fond of caged song-birds. Fowls and ducks, turkeys and geese, partridges and quails are natives of the East. Our sparrow makes himself still more free and easy in India than in England; the minah might be called the Indian sparrow, though here, where everything is on a bigger scale and of intenser tint, this part seems taken by the impudent and ubiquitous Indian crow. Here, too, are other birds familiar to us, as well as many foreigners like the sweet-voiced bulbul, the crested hoopoe, and the brilliant little sun-bird. The woods swarm, too, with prettily-striped squirrels and gracefully gambolling lizards, as with thievish monkeys which presume on their sacred character to steal shamelessly. In the middle of field or garden rises the little platform on which the native "crowboy" sits all day to scare away those leaping and flying poachers. Not the least destructive are the "flying-foxes", a kind of huge bat, that gather upon the trees in thick clusters a shortsighted stranger might take for the fruit they pillage, if they were not given to noisy wrangling over their booty.

Far more formidable in India than all fourfooted beasts of prey are the reptiles, from the hooded cobra, perhaps as long as a man, to a grass-lurking snake, no larger than an adder, that is death to so many barefooted natives. Where the tiger yearly

slays his hundreds, the serpent kills his thousands. In spite of rewards offered for the extermination of deadly snakes, in most parts the death-rate from this cause is said to increase, perhaps as being more accurately reported. In Bengal, for example, against 41,000 snakes killed in a year, must be put down more than 10,000 human victims. Another report put the whole annual mortality from this cause, in India, at nearly 25,000. Not only the superstition of the natives has to be combated, leading them to venerate and cherish these loathsome destroyers, but the cunning that tempts them actually to breed snakes for the sake of the reward. One has heard of an official who had spent all the annual sum granted him for this purpose, having a basket full of venomous creatures turned out into his compound by a disappointed speculator. To Europeans, with their strong boots, the smaller snakes are far less dangerous; yet a sahib going out at night is not ashamed to be piloted by a half-naked native carrying a torch or lantern to clear the way. Any thorny thicket or fence, any dark corner, the roof of one's house, or even one's pillow may shelter a cobra; and many are the exciting stories told of narrow escapes in English homes, while the poor Hindu runs daily risk of what he takes for an inevitable fate, and his innate conservatism resents the clearing off of scrub and jungle which harbour such an enemy close to his door. The huge python, that crushes its victim for leisurely deglutition, has at least the good taste to keep itself more out of the way of human life.

Crocodiles are kept in tanks, sometimes cherished as sacred, but on muddy banks they lurk to snatch living victims, and, like cruel giant tortoises, can gorge themselves on half-burned corpses set afloat down the rivers. The crocodile abounds in the Ganges; and in the coast lagoons offers itself as an imposing quarry for our sportsmen. Smaller members of the lizard tribe make themselves much at home everywhere. In the Bombay Natural History Museum cobras have been shown in the same glass cases with chameleons, that either have



Crocodiles in a "Tank", near Karachi

This famous magar (or "mugger") pond is about 300 yards in circumference, and contains many little grassy islands on which the crocodiles bask. In the picture the whole of the denizens of the pond are swarming to the bank in the expectation of food from one of the keepers.

established some *modus vivendi* with their irritable neighbours, or actually find a cloak of darkness in their wonderful capacity for at once taking the colour of the branch or other surface on which they lie. Most wonderful, of course, are the tricks of the snake charmers, who, it appears, pretend to a mastery that has more of practice than of magic in it, and sometimes pay with their lives for too confident familiarity. Their performances must be classed with the really marvellous feats of Indian jugglery figuring in many travellers' tales.

The mongoose is a grey ichneumon often kept tame in Indian houses, like our domestic pussy, for his services in killing snakes as well as rats and mice. Rats count as a common nuisance, especi-

ally the huge species known as bandicoots, one of nearly a score of tribes, our brown rat perhaps the most numerous in India. Besides preying on crops, these prolific rodents are found guilty of carrying the infection of plague. As unexpected consequence of drought has been noticed an increased swarm of rats in starving circumstances, the explanation being the monsoon's failing to drown them by myriads in their holes. There are other multitudinous vermin not to be kept aloof by cleanliness. One of the first things an Englishman learns in India is to shake out clothes, slippers, and sponge in case of their concealing a venomous scorpion, which finds itself much attracted to his bath-room, as do hideous bloated spiders and similar pests.



More ruinous visitors are the white ants (*termites*), that, once they troop into a house, will make skeletons of boots, books, wood-work, and everything not armoured against them. To keep off these omnivorous creatures, as well as armies of red ants and black ants, floors may be washed with corrosive sublimate, boxes placed upon bottles, and the feet of bedsteads and larders on small sheets of copper or in tins of water. That amusing book *Tribes on my Frontier*, by "E. H. A.", puts a humorous face on troubles only too familiar to Indian house-keepers.

"The struggle for existence should drive a man in this country to learn the ways of his border tribes. For no one, I take it, who reflects for an instant, will deny that a small mosquito, with black rings upon a white ground, or a sparrow that has finally made up its mind to rear a family in your ceiling, exercises an influence on your personal happiness far beyond the Tzar of all the Russias. It is not a question of scientific frontiers—the enemy invades us on all sides. We are plundered, insulted, phlebotomized under our own vine and our own fig-tree. We might make head against the foes if we laid to heart the lesson our national history in India teaches, namely, that the way to fight uncivilized enemies is to encourage them to cut one another's throats, then step in and inherit the spoil. But we murder our friends, exterminate our allies, and then groan under the oppression of the enemy. I might illustrate this by the case of the meek and much-suffering musk-rat. . . . It is not a rat at all, neither *Mus* this nor *Mus* that, but *sorex cærulescens*, which means the heavenly shrew. And if it is not a rat in name, it is still less that villainous thing in nature. It wants none of your provisions, and wanton destruction is not in all its thoughts; its sole purpose in the house is a friendly one, *videlicet*, to hunt the loathsome cockroach and the pestiferous beetle. . . . That quality which brings the meek little animal into such bad odour, so to speak, is the defensive armour with which nature has provided it; and every time you hunt a musk-rat you justify the provision."

Gay butterflies, glittering beetles, and sparkling fireflies are the rajahs of an insect world containing many low castes. One

must visit any hot country to know what is meant by a plague of flies. Flitting and scuttling life here gives more annoyance than the fear of wild beasts. Macbeth's conscience were hardly more murderous to sleep than the noises that beset a virtuous man ensconced beneath muslin curtains, a far from impregnable defence against the winged and stinged foes buzzing about him in hundreds, with a light burning all night to scare away the plague of creeping, crawling, and prowling creatures that haunt his dwelling. No sooner does he think all still about him than there tunes up an unwelcome concert of noise—howls from the jungle, croaks from the swamp, rustlings of huge wings in the branches about the house, the rattling of bones dropped on the roof by birds of prey, patterings and scratchings from every wall; the very furniture alive with chirpings and cracklings; squeakings and creakings inside and outside; a feverish dread of skipping and hovering things felt rather than seen to be about one's bed; and through all, the steady hum of the tiny busy mosquito athirst for human blood. One hardly cares to get up in the dark for fear of setting foot on some scuttling cockroach or huge spider, or even deadly snake. Every alarm is magnified by restless imagination. The clamour of the jackals over a carcass suggests a band of hungry wolves. A mongoose having it out with a rat beneath the floor is like an animal Armageddon. Does your faithful dog growl in the veranda, you make sure a leopard is about to pounce upon him. A restless horse seems to be trampling like a *must* elephant. A native watchman may prove his vigilance by raising beast-like howls. And perhaps over all comes the roar of the tiger, nothing now to be afraid of, as he would go silent enough if attending to his bad business. Such are the torments of a sweltering Indian night, that give an Englishman cause to "thank the goodness and the grace" that made his birthplace in a land where a caterwauling puss or a scratching mouse would be the worst of nocturnal bugbears.



Indian Tailors at work (Lucknow)

## PRODUCTIONS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Under this head, again, variety marks the productions of a country that might be called a continent; or if there be a characteristic in its rank vegetation it is the tropical note of exuberant hugeness. On the mountains grow wildernesses of the timber belonging to successive zones, the most valuable being the teak and the sal wood, whose tough fibre well replaces our English oak. In the low country, too, there are patches of wild jungle, often filling up valleys or extending into great forests about the foot of the hills, sometimes thin and scrubby, sometimes close, dark, and tangled, almost always wanting in a certain indefinable sweetness that has made our woods the haunt of poets and lovers, as an English hedge in springtime has shy splendours to

shame the purple and yellow blooms of an Eastern garden. The cultivated plains are dotted with groves and spreading trees whose fruit is not more welcome than their shade. The most renowned of these is the Banyan, or Indian Fig, that throws down its branching cords to take fresh root till the original trunk becomes surrounded by a whole wood of countless offshoots, covering acres with the cool shade of laurel-like leaves among which an army can encamp thousands strong.

"So like a temple did it seem that there

A pious heart's first impulse would be prayer."

Twined among the banyan stems may be seen the lighter and more graceful leaves, whispering like a poplar's, of the Peepul,

or Sacred Fig, that often shelters temples of the faith in whose legends it figures so prominently, or, smeared with red paint, itself makes a point of adoration for simple villagers. Our Public Works Department imitates the Moguls in shading the roads with leafy avenues, stretching for hundreds of miles. On the hot coasts especially, the foliage of palms gives its languidly drooping lines to the landscape. The southern slopes of the Himalayas are thickly clad with sturdy evergreens, the most noble of them the gnarled Deodar, akin to the cedars of Lebanon. The holm oak is another inhabitant of the mountains. Farther down, the Chunar or Eastern plane makes a mass of grateful shade. Common are various acacias, with their slender foliage and gay show of blossom. The Neem tree is cherished for the unpleasant smell of its branches and yellow berries, which act like our elder to drive away insects. Ebony, ironwood, sandal-wood and other choice kinds of timber are found in various situations. And king of the tribes of grass, that here in their slenderer form hide the creeping tiger and even the tall sides of the elephant, is the Bamboo, growing rankly all over India, in many parts of which it makes such a staff of life as the birch tree was to a Canadian Red man. Captain Lewin (*Wild Races of S.E. India*) tells us how a native

"Builds his house of the bamboo; he fertilizes his fields with its ashes; of its stem he makes vessels in which to carry water; with two bits of bamboo he can produce fire; its young shoots provide a dainty dinner-dish; and he weaves his sleeping-mat with fine slips thereof. The instruments with which his women weave their cotton are of bamboo. He makes drinking-cups of it, and his head at night rests on a bamboo pillow; his forts are built of it; he catches fish, makes baskets and stools, and thatches his house with the help of the bamboo. He smokes a pipe of bamboo. Finally, his funeral pile is lighted with bamboo. The hillman would die without bamboo, and the one thing he finds hardest to believe is that in other countries the bamboo does not grow, and that men live in ignorance of it."

The forests, after long suffering from

wastefulness, are now carefully managed by English officials, who in many parts have saved the country from becoming a desert for want of planting. Great care is taken not only to preserve the native growths, but to introduce foreign stocks that may flourish here, such as the Australian gum tree. The most valuable exotic thus transplanted seems the Cinchona, once so jealously guarded in Peru, till Sir Clements Markham smuggled out shoots of it that on the Neilgherries and other Indian heights have given to the East a remedy so often needed in its feverish climates. Coffee is an older importation that thrives in the south, as tea on the northern hills of India; but these may be spoken of when we come to Ceylon, which has cultivated both.

India is rich in fruits, the best known perhaps the mango, groves of which often offer grateful shade to man and a temptation to the easy morals of monkeys. Its luscious flavour is highly approved by some; but British palates may prefer the more homely sweetness of apples grown in the hills. A characteristic product of moist lowlands and seaboard are the coco-nuts that afford both meat and drink; the broad and bright-leaved plantain, too, supplies travellers with clusters of satisfying fruit akin to the banana. Various kinds of figs abound; so do dates, not of the best quality. There are oranges on some of the hills, and wild apricots in the Himalayas. Our strawberries can sometimes be grown about hill-stations. Pine-apples are at home in such a natural hothouse, as are many fruits less familiar to us: limes, pomegranates, guavas, tamarinds, some of which begin to be seen in our markets, while others are known in the form of preserves. Sugar is made in India both from the cane and from palm juice, which ferments into an intoxicating drink that has sent its name, *toddy*, to take root in our own language; as it is said that *punch* also (Hindustani for five) stood god-father to a beverage composed of five "materials". The hotter parts are rich in pepper, ginger, cardamoms, capsicum-chillies, and other spices and condiment-plants, so much used in the national dish



An Indian Open-air Laundry, Darjeeling

Bourne & Shepherd

Even the poorest Hindu does not wash his own clothes, and the *dhobi*, or professional washerman, belongs to one of the lowest castes. Their methods of cleansing are primitive and destructive.

curry, which, as well as the chutney pickle, has been adopted in England.

Many kinds of vegetables make part of the people's diet, including various native gourds and vetches, and potatoes and cabbages, which we have introduced on suitable soil. As to crops which are India's chief wealth, these mainly consist of different kinds of millet; next comes rice, grown chiefly on the moist river basins and coast lands, while wheat flourishes most in the north-west, and barley on the hills. Rice has long been exported, and of late years Indian wheat has disturbed the corn markets of Europe. Most of the farming is done on such a small scale, and with so little help of scientific agriculture, that there is room for improvement which would much increase the yield of Indian corn land; while the adhesiveness of the ryots, cling-

ing to their ancestral holding of two or three acres, is the main obstacle to the cultivation of tracts still given up to nature or to the temporary clearings of half-civilized tribes.

Among other valuable crops a notable one is the poppy, grown chiefly in one district of Bengal, under Government superintendence, to supply by its juice the opium on which India made such a high profit at the expense of the morals of Chinamen, a scandal loudly denounced by philanthropists. They in their zeal seem inclined to exaggerate the evil effects of this drug, that is used by Indian natives also, even by the vigorous Sikhs, and, taken in moderation, which few natives can afford to exceed, in their climate may not be more harmful than beer in ours; but here we open a nearer question of controversy. The pro-

duction of opium is now restricted; while the Indian hemp, growing wild in the jungle, yields a more baleful drug. Indigo was another important staple, the cultivation of which is being rooted out by the use of chemical dye. Tobacco is largely grown, but for the most part of inferior quality, though in the south are made the strong Trichinopoly cheroots and other cigars which of late years have become more popular in England. Various oil seeds are an important crop where oil is so much used by the natives, both internally and externally as well as for lighting. It makes some Englishmen shudder to find that the castor-oil shrub is one of the prettiest plants in India, with its large leaves and branches of pear-shaped blossom so admirable among coarser blooms.

Cotton has long been grown in India for local weaving, and it is largely exported, though its short staple makes it inferior to the best American cotton. Now cotton manufacture comes to be an important industry of Bombay, as about Calcutta is that of jute, the demand for which material, made up into sacks or otherwise, has brought no small gain to India as to Scotland. The Bombay cotton-mills, to a great extent in the hands of native millionaires, are at a disadvantage in the expense of fuel and machinery, but can oppose Lancashire through the lowness of wages here, though these have gone up since such new enterprises offer employment to the swarming population. Silk weaving by steam, too, has been introduced into Bombay, while the material is chiefly produced in Bengal or imported from China; but efforts are being made to spread the cultivation of silk over India. Woollen-mills and paper-mills have been set up here and there, and we have shown the natives how to improve on their rude methods of crushing out oil and sugar; while, for our own wants, we establish breweries to undersell that "East India Ale" that was such an expensive luxury, and manufacture the ice that to us is almost a necessity of life. As a reward for our encouraging Indian manufactures, sore-headed patriots have done their best

to boycott British goods, which are also handicapped by a customs duty much resented in Lancashire.

Hand-loom weaving is a national industry of India; and some districts were long renowned for finer fabrics, such as muslin, which seem now to be dying out. For ordinary wear the native cloth of silk or cotton is not wholly supplanted by machine-made goods. Silk and cotton are a good deal woven together, both often brocaded with gold and silver thread, and the native taste for glitter is gratified by spangles of metal or even glass. More familiar to us than that *kinob*, tinselled stuff, become the carpets and rugs, so cheaply made in Indian jails. Thick and warm fabrics of camel's hair, also, have come into use in Britain. On the other hand, there seems to be a "slump" in one of the most famous of Indian manufactures, the shawls woven of delicate goat's hair in the Cashmere valley, at Rampur and elsewhere, with cheaper imitations of which the unwary tourist is apt to be taken in by smooth-tongued pedlars. Some of the real Cashmere shawls are made with not less than sixty shades of colour, arranged in artful patterns, a single one taking weeks or even years to finish; and an elaborate specimen may cost a thousand pounds or more. Indeed Dr. Birdwood mentions one brilliant garment, made for the Guicowar of Baroda, which was worth a million, gems having been lavishly used in its embroidery. But the art of such sumptuous ornamentation of cloth turbans, velvet trappings, and so forth may be expected to die out, as native potentates lose the taste for "barbaric pearl and gold" and take more to copying our plain dress.

Among the artificers of India the gold and silver workers excel in patiently-skilful working with somewhat rude tools. With a handful of charcoal and a long blow-pipe for bellows, they show the ability of long practice, hampered by respect for conventional ideas of art; but it is a question if they are likely to profit from Western models now set before them in place of those illustrated by their own chasing, embossing, enamelling, inlaying, and so



A Hindu Brass-worker (Benares)

forth. It is said that Hindu gods are manufactured wholesale at Birmingham; but this statement may be apocryphal. The almost universal wear of bangles, anklets, and other ornaments by women, whose arms and legs rather than whose veiled face—but for its nose-ring, perhaps—seem their fortune, must alone keep this trade alive in India, as should the removal of restrictions on the importation of silver work into England, where some of the productions of Indian jewellers have long been known, the delicate gold chains of Trichinopoli, for instance. The brass and copper work for which Benares and other places are celebrated has ample encouragement in the domestic and religious customs of the people; and samples of this ware also find their way into England. The potter's art, too, flourishes on much practice, the native *chatties* being often beautifully coloured as well as gracefully shaped.

Silver is imported into India, but gold

has long been obtained by washing, and is now crushed out of quartz by machinery, an enterprise attended with the usual uncertainty, as some shareholders in Indian mining companies are aware. Precious gems, which in times past were often to be acquired by summary methods of the strong hand, are still sought for here and there in gravelly soil; but in this kind of riches India is far outshone by South Africa. Among the hills abound many of the less costly stones, agates, cornelians, lapis lazuli, and so forth, used with such lavish profusion in buildings like the Taj.

With the baser minerals, that in the long run prove truer riches, India is naturally well endowed; but in this case, unfortunately, the distribution of materials ill lends itself to production. There is a difficulty in bringing together fuel, metal, and the stone necessary to form a flux, so that iron must often be smelted by native methods in such a small way as will not exhaust the

## The World of To-day

local supply of charcoal. The large iron-works that have been established seem, as a rule, to depend on Government; but in Chota Nagpore great iron beds have of late years been opened up by private enterprise, which, with coal at hand, supply steel as well as pig-iron. There is a plentiful stock of coal, chiefly in the central part of the peninsula, but it gives too much ash to be good for manufacturing purposes. Petroleum is tapped in the Punjab and in Assam. Stone and slate are quarried in the hills; some parts, notably the Deccan, have a useful building material in the red laterite that, cut like cheese from its volcanic bed, hardens in the air and serves as the brick (*later*) from which it is named, not so hard but that a tin roof may be needed to resist the deluge of the monsoon.

Salt, won from mines and quarries in the salt-hills of the north-west corner, or evaporated from shallow lagoons on the coast, makes a valuable monopoly of the Indian Government; its revenue from this source coming next to the land-tax, and, levied on a so indispensable commodity, causing the popular grievance such a tax has been felt to be in European countries. Saltpetre is largely exported. Among the peculiar natural products of India should be mentioned lac, the secretion of an insect on resinous jungle trees, which supplies both a brilliant dye and the gum used for the lacquered work so common in Oriental ornamentation. Many other minor productions might be mentioned, some common to India with its tropical neighbours.

India already stands high among the markets of the world; and to extend her trade she needs mainly European capital and energy for the development of her manifold resources. By the establishment of new industries, by the teaching of improved methods, and by the encouragement

of manufactures where the cost of plant can be balanced by the cheapness of labour, the Indian Government appears fully alive to its duty of providing for a population that, within half a century, has doubled under our rule. It makes a painful question whether one chief peril for this people be not the outcome of our well-intentioned protection. No longer decimated by internal wars, or left to perish without relief from recurrent plagues and famines, these helpless millions go on growing at a rate that threatens to press sorely on the means of subsistence. The main hindrance to progress seems to be an inert conservatism, generated by something in the climate and conditions of life, which here checks the development of human nature beyond a certain point. But even the unchanging East, whose sons for so many centuries have not perceptibly differed from what they were when the haughty Briton was a painted savage, may yet awaken from that lethargy in which

" it let the legions thunder by  
And plunged in thought again ".

Silent forces of change are now indeed at work, their effect as yet little visible, but it may be expected to increase with education and other solvent influences, more powerful than the violent catastrophes of the past. Knowledge, self-interest, contact with a race of such different ideals and energies, cannot, one believes, be in vain; and progress should be rapid once the natives came fully to recognize the essential justice of a rule, the most considerate and the best-intentioned of any ever established by foreign dominion, which has now been established over the whole of the peninsula, while extending also beyond its natural boundaries.

# Commercial and Statistical Survey

## ASIA

### Position

Asia is essentially the base of the Old World lands which form the island mass of the three great continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa. Believed to be the oldest portion geologically, its specific position in the "land-hemisphere" of the world has proved a fundamental control in the slow process of world evolution.

Historically, it has repeatedly been the source of movements of peoples and ideas, which have passed outward from Asia to the lands extending far to the west and the south.

It lies wholly in the Northern Hemisphere, and forms a compact mass stretching some 5400 miles from north to south, from Cape Chelyuskin (lat. 78° N.) to Cape Burros (lat. 1° N.), with a maximum extension of 6000 miles east and west, from Cape Baba (long. 26° E.) to Cape Dezhnev (long. 170° W.). It is bounded on three sides by oceans—the Arctic to the north, the Pacific to the east, and the Indian to the south—but on the west the land features are continued beyond indeterminate or negotiable frontiers—the Urals, the Caspian, the Caucasus, the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, and the Red Sea.

As a continent Asia is pre-eminent in the two primary relations of size and altitude. It is the largest continent. Five times the size of Australasia, four times that of Europe, half as large again as Africa, larger than North and South America put together, it covers one-third of the land mass of the globe. Russian Asia alone is nearly twice as large as Europe, and Siberia is half as large again as Canada or the United States or Brazil. In altitude, again, Asia stands apart. It has an extreme range of about 30,000 feet, the culminating peaks being a mile higher than those of the Andes or the Rocky Mountains.

### Relief

The whole continent may be divided broadly into five great physical regions:

(1) A vast mountain and plateau core in the centre; (2) a continuous lowland of Atlantic type in the north-west, sloping north and westward from the northern scarp of the central core; (3) a series of lowland valleys converging on the Indian Ocean from the southern scarp of

the central core; (4) three terminal peninsulas; and (5) a Pacific hinterland falling in terraces from the eastward scarp of the core to the Tuscarora deep.

The compelling feature in the relief of Asia is (1) the gigantic development of plateau, which occupies nearly two-fifths of the whole area of Asia, and forms the backbone of the continent. The pivot of the plateau system is the Pamir, which divides it into (a) a lower and narrower western unit, between the Aegean and the Indus valley, and (b) a higher and broader eastern unit lying between the Behring Strait and the Indo-Gangetic plain.

The bulk, breadth, and height of this plateau area present a most formidable barrier between the continuous Arcto-Atlantic type of lowland on the north-west, and the discontinuous Indo-Pacific type of lowland in the south-east. The eastern extension occupies nearly a quarter of the total area of Asia, and lies in three distinct levels. The highest or Tibetan Level (10,000 to 16,000 feet) includes the Pamir, otherwise it is entirely south of the Kwen-lun, Altyn-tag, and Nan-shan line.

The intermediate level or Kobdo-Vitim area, which does not average more than 5000 feet, lies mainly north of the Chinese Altai, and west of the Yablonoi. The rest of the area lies at an average height of not more than 3000 feet, between the Altai and Kwen-lun, highest in the west, and between the Khingan-Stanovoi scarp and the Yablonoi in the east.

The northern or Arcto-Atlantic scarp is weathered into broad longitudinal trenches of gentle gradient, especially in the Zungarian basin, while the Pacific scarp, as typically, presents almost a sheer face to the monsoon plains, especially in the Khingan.

The western extension presents similar features to the eastern, but on a smaller scale. The northern scarp—marked by the Pontic, Elburz, Hindu Kush line—is higher, steeper, and more continuous than the southern scarp, as marked by the Tauric, Kurdistan, and Zagros mountains: and the same is true of the eastern scarp—Sulaimans, &c.—as compared with that facing the Aegean. But in distinction from the western extension, the terraces of the eastern mass are not as marked—though the eastern section is higher than the west—nor are there such extremes of level.



The whole of the continent north-west of the plateau core is occupied by (2) a vast **lowland**, draining—like Canada—towards both the Arctic and the Atlantic, though the immense distance to the Atlantic prevents the rivers from actually reaching it. The general slope is from a higher east to a lower west. There are three distinct levels, and the lowland may be divided broadly into three physical divisions based on differences of elevation. (a) In the north-east, east of 90° E., is a triangular-shaped area of more or less dissected upland (600 to 1500 feet), with its base along the right flank of the Yenisei River. This level includes the entire basin of the Lena, and the smaller lowland in the extreme north-east, which is backed by the Stanovoi Mountains. It has the greatest average height, and drains only to the Arctic, where nearly all the rivers tend to form deltas as distinct from the estuary habit of rivers west of Cape Chelyuskin. The Lena rises in the Baikal Mountains of the northern scarp, and, after a course of some 2860 miles, in which it receives several tributaries—Vitim, Olekma, Aldan, Vilyui, &c., it enters the Arctic through numerous distributaries of a large delta.

(b) The central section, west of 90° E. and the Taimyr Peninsula, is drained by the Yenisei and Ob-Irtysh Rivers. Though again an area of Arctic drainage, the average elevation is lower (about 600 feet), while the greatest extension is from north to south, and the mass of the land is in lower and more temperate latitudes. The coast suffers from being ice-bound, but is open for longer periods, while the river mouths are estuaries indicating subsidence in the section. The Yenisei (about 3000 miles long) rises in the mountains of north-west Mongolia, and it receives many important tributaries, of which the Angara, and Upper, Stony, and Lower Tunguska streams are chief. The Ob-Irtysh system covers an enormous basin, offering a network of over 9000 miles of waterway, and is connected by canal with the Yenisei. The Ob rises on the flanks of the Altai Mountains, and has a course estimated as about 2260 miles.

(c) The third section, in the extreme west, has a still lower elevation—falling even below sea-level in the Aral-Caspian depression, though rising above 600 feet in the Balkash uplands. It forms an area of inland drainage in comparatively low latitudes. The three rivers rise in the deep valleys striking out from the mountains running north from the Pamirs, and drain north-westwards—the Ili to Lake Balkash (780 feet), and the Amu and Syr Daria to the Aral Sea (157 feet level).

South of the great plateau core of the whole continent are (3) the **discontinuous lowlands** of Mesopotamia and Hindustan. These lowlands have been constructed largely of great masses of alluvial deposits, carried down by the rivers—Euphrates and Tigris, and the Indus and Ganges, respectively—into the straits which once existed between the young mountain belt and the old continental fragment of the south.

South of these lowlands are (4) the **terminal peninsulas** of Arabia, India, and Malay. Arabia is an old rock block, characterized by a marked uniformity of coast-line. The plateau is tipped up seawards to the west, to the south, and to the south-east, so that from the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Gulf of Oman, it presents the appearance of a fringe of coastal mountains. Only towards the

Persian Gulf and Mesopotamia does it sink down gradually.

The plateau reappears in peninsular India, but while there is a similar tilting up to the west, the centre is slightly depressed, and the Eastern Ghats are but the seaward margin of the plateau where it fronts the Bay of Bengal. The result of these peculiarities is seen in the direction of the rivers, which easily break through the eastern edge to the sea.

Between 90° and 100° E. is (5) the **Pacific hinterland**, typically narrow and mountainous. The east and west trend of the feature lines, which is so characteristic of the Atlantic, gives way to the north and south trend which is characteristic of the Pacific. From the maximum uplift in the interior the land falls in terraces to the Tuscara deep.

## Climate

The great size of the land area, its extension through so many degrees of latitude, and the variety of the actual relief, are factors which have dominated the climatic conditions of Asia. The climate offers examples of nearly all climatic types somewhere within its borders. Broadly speaking, it may be stated that the rainfall decreases from south to north and from east to west; while the range of temperature tends to be characteristically continental—generally over 60° F.—in the north, as markedly as the range is typically “monsoon”—only about 10° F.—in the south, the mountain and plateau core of the continent functioning as vitally as a climatic as a physical barrier.

The continent as a whole may be divided into seven climatic regions:

(a) The Arctic area of extreme dry cold forming the tundra belt.

(b) The Siberian continental area, characterized by extremes of temperature (except in the Kamchatkan peninsula) which increase with altitude towards the east and the south. At Verkhoyansk is what is termed the “pole of cold”, the average temperature of January being -60° F. The rainfall is between 10 and 12 inches, falling chiefly in the summer.

(c) The Turanian region is also “continental”, but the cold is not as extreme, while the rainfall decreases to under 10 inches, falling mainly in winter.

(d) Asia Minor comes within the Mediterranean area, with a comparatively small range of temperature and winter rains.

(e) The Central Mountain block is everywhere dry, but while on the high plateaux the cold is emphasized, in the depressions the heat tends to be extreme.

(f) South of the block are the “monsoon” lands, where the range of temperature is comparatively small, though the temperature is high and the heavy rainfall is concentrated in summer months.

(g) The south-western desert regions are characterized by extremes of heat in summer, warm winters, and deficiency or absence of rain.

The climatic conditions in the islands fringing the coasts, though modified by their ocean setting, vary considerably with latitude.

## CLIMATE.

T. = Temperature in degrees Fahrenheit. R. = Rainfall in inches.

		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April.	May.	June.	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Latitude.
N.	Omsk ... T.	0	2	15	35	55	65	70	70	53	38	20	8	} 54° 58' N.
	... R.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
	Okhotsk ... T.	-12	-8	10	21	35	50	55	58	45	23	6	-8	
W.	... R.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	} 41° 18' N.
	Khiva ... T.	30	30	45	62	73	80	84	83	70	60	50	40	
	... R.	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
S.	Smyrna ... T.	50	50	51	58	64	72	80	78	73	65	65	52	} 38° 26' N.
	... R.	4	3	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
	Calcutta ... T.	66	70.7	80	85.5	85.2	85	83.2	82.6	82.6	80.5	72.9	66	
E.	... R.	0.4	0.9	1.3	2.2	5.7	11.9	12.8	13.5	10.3	5.1	0.7	0.3	} 22° 34' N.
	Rangoon ... T.	75	78	81	83	83	80	79	79	80	78	76	...	
	... R.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
S.	Singapore ... T.	80	83	83	83	83	83	82	82	82	81	82	79	} 1° 24' N.
	... R.	10	5	2	2	3	8	8	8	8	16	16	16	
	Tientsin ... T.	20	30	40	53	64	73	77	80	70	60	45	32	} 39° 8' N.
	... R.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
	Shanghai ... T.	37	39	46	56	65	73	80.7	80.2	72.8	63.2	51.8	4.8	
	... R.	2.0	2.4	3.3	3.5	3.6	6.8	4.7	6.1	4.9	3.2	1.9	1.1	} 31° 13' N.

## Vegetation

The variety of relief and climate result naturally in variety of vegetation, but the wide tracts of uniform surfaces which occur lead to the wide dispersion of typical plants.

(a) In the extreme north the tundra vegetation is more or less limited to the moss and lichens on which the reindeer feed.

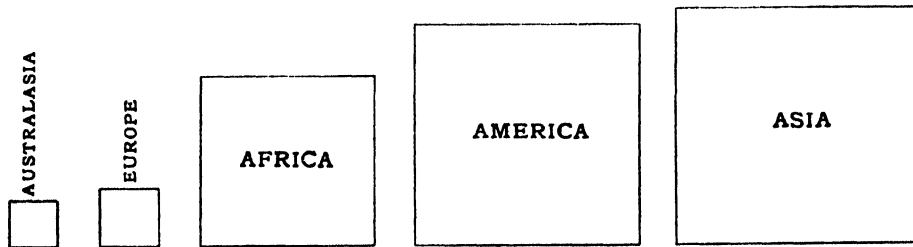
(b) The Siberian area, with its loamy soil, supports temperate forests—evergreens to the north, and mixed evergreen and deciduous trees farther south.

vegetation, and typical monsoon crops, e.g. rice, cotton, indigo.

(g) In the far islands of the equatorial belt the true tropical products are grown, i.e. sago palm, coco-nut, bread-fruit, and spices.

## Population

Asia contains about one half of the inhabitants of the world, and of this total about five-sixths are concentrated in the lowlands of China and India, which lie in the monsoon region south of the scarp. The maximum



Comparative Areas of Five Continents

(c) "Steppe" areas occur where the extreme dryness or great changes of temperature militate against the growth of trees. These may form rich pasture lands on the borders of forest lands, e.g. as in the Upper Irtysh and Salenga basins, or poor grasslands on the borders of desert regions, e.g. Turanian, Tarim, and Shamo areas.

(d) In the hot deserts of the south-west the typical desert or drought-resisting plants occur in the oases, e.g. palms, acacias, &c.

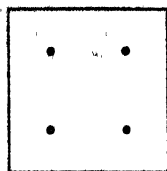
(e) The Mediterranean area of Asia Minor produces the typical Mediterranean plants, e.g. olives, figs, myrtles.

(f) In the monsoon areas are the wet jungle or delta

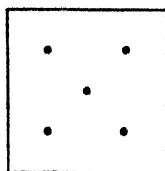
density of population over a large area (310 per square mile) is reached in Japan, and the minimum density (36 per square mile) in the northern lowlands of Siberia and Turkestan.

Broadly speaking, the inhabitants of Asia may be classified as representatives of two main races: (1) the Armenoids, or white or wavy-haired race, chiefly in Asia Minor, Caucasia, &c.; (2) Mongolian, or yellow or lank-haired race, in China, Japan, &c. These races have, however, become intermingled to such an extent that in detail Asia offers an infinite variety of examples of variations in the same race or blends of races, e.g. Poly-

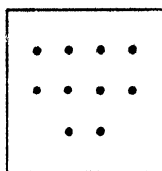
# Commercial and Statistical Survey



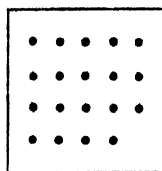
**ASIATIC RUSSIA**  
(before the war)



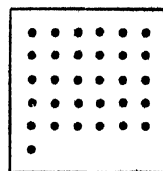
**BURMA**



**CHINA**



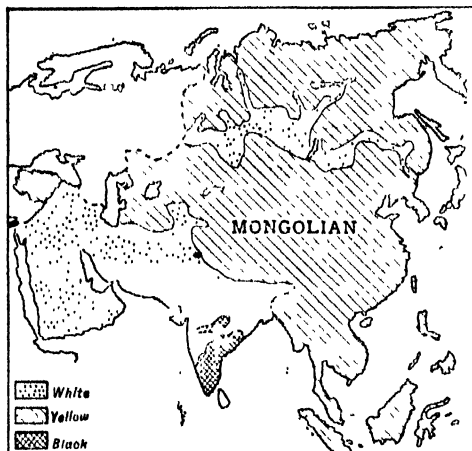
**INDIA**



**JAPAN**

Approximate Density of Population per square mile. (Each dot represents ten persons to the square mile.)

nesians, &c. But just as Europe is regarded as the domain of the "white" race, Africa of the negro, so Asia is essentially the area of characterization of the Mongol or yellow man.



Broad Racial Divisions

## Religions

Asia has been designated as the "Cradle of the World's Great Creeds", and it is a curious fact that all the great

religions of the world have originated within its borders. In the fertile plains of the south-east, with their dense populations and immense variety of plant and animal life, arose the three great "teachers", Brahma, Buddha, and Confucius; and the extraordinary productiveness of the areas is illustrated in the number and character of the idols.

The hot deserts of the south-west, where the products were few and simple and life was difficult, gave birth to the Monotheistic religions, based on self-denial, not on self-indulgence. The teachings of Moses, Christ, and Mohamed, reflect the deserts of Sinai, Judaea, and Arabia.

## "RUSSIAN" LANDS IN ASIA

The Asiatic territories of the former Russian Empire covered an area estimated at 6,294,000 sq. miles, with a population in 1915 of 29,000,000. Politically the different provinces and governments were grouped into the large divisions of

	Area, Sq. Miles.	Population.
Siberia ...	4,831,882 ...	10,377,000
Central Asia ...	1,366,832 ...	11,254,000
Transcaucasia ...	95,400 ...	7,509,500

After the Revolution the area lost its political unity, and devolved into a state of chaos, out of which numerous independent political units are now emerging. The following is a summary of the political arrangements as existing in 1921: -

Division	Area.	Population	Government.	Capital.
Siberia ...	73,000,000	710,000,000	Republic (1917) Soviet.	Tomsk or Ekaterinburg.
Yakutsk ...	71,500,000	7350,000	Republic, May, 1918.	—
Turkestan ...	7400,000	76,000,000	Republic, Jan. 1918.	—
Bokhara ...	83,000	125,000	Soviet (1919).	Bokhara.
Khiva ...	24,000	646,000	Soviet (1921).	Khiva.
Azerbaijan ...	c. 40,000	74,500,000	Republic, 1918; Soviet, 1920.	Baku.
Georgia ...	74,577	c. 3,000,000	Republic 1918; recognized 1921.	Tiflis.
Armenia ...	80,000	c. 8,600,000	Republic, 1918.	Erivan.

## SIBERIA

## Position

Siberia lies almost wholly north of lat. 50° N., and between long. 60° and 170° E. It stretches some 4000 miles in a south-west to north-easterly direction, from the Urals to the Pacific, with a width rarely under 1400 miles, between the icy Arctic waters of the north coast and the mountain scarp lands of the southern frontier. A continuous lowland, nominally separated from Europe by the Ural Mountains, Siberia yet forms an integral part of the greater lowland which stretches across Eurasia, from the Atlantic almost to the Pacific. The Urals have never offered any true obstruction to intercommunication, but they have emphasized the importance of the Ural-Caspian gap of the south, where the level plains of east and west merge into each other, without a sign, in unbroken continuity. This gap, in the belt of grasslands, has been of vital significance in the history of Eurasia as being the route of invaders, whether from the east, e.g. Huns, Magyars, &c., or from the west, e.g. Russians.

The vegetation belts of Siberia (see p. 253), based on climatic control, form as markedly a sequence, from north to south, as the physical divisions—based on mean elevation—do naturally from east to west (for relief see p. 252). From the economic standpoint the physical control (direct or indirect) has divided Siberia into eastern and western divisions as definitely as the climatic control (direct or indirect) has determined, up to the present, the expansion of trade northwards.

**Western Siberia**, between the Urals and the Yenisei, is the most highly developed, the most thickly populated, and the most accessible section of the area. South of the barren tundra lands of the far north is a wide belt of little-exploited forests—offering possibilities for timber and furs. South again, between lat. 53° and 57° N., is the black-earth region, which, before the war, was being rapidly populated and developed into a flourishing agricultural area. As the grasslands pass towards the southern mountains, the cultivated fields give way to rich pastures, and considerable mineral deposits have already been discovered and worked.

## Resources

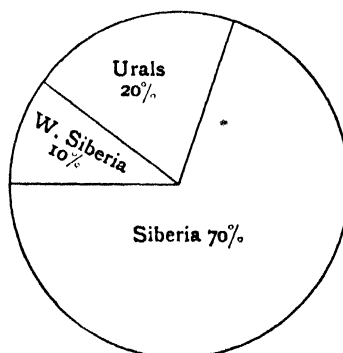
The forests of Western Siberia, though extensive, have barely been exploited. This is essentially due to the difficulty of transport, and the attraction of the first colonists to the more inviting lands of the south. The utilization of the forests and the water power is, however, a question of time, dependent on the opening of the waterways of the south and the Kara sea route of the north.

## Agriculture

It has been estimated that, if properly cultivated, the black-earth region and the arable stretches among the foothills of Western Siberia could be made to support five times the population of European Russia before the war.

Quantities of wheat, barley, rye, and oats were grown and exported westwards, but there remain wide lands still uncultivated, while the transport and storage facilities require still further developments before the region will in any sense be fully exploited. In addition to the cereals grown, stock-raising is important. The Trans-Siberian railway, the main artery of trade, runs from east to west along the margin of the grasslands, while the rivers chiefly drain from south to north, and thus form natural roadways from the south for the droves of cattle, which are driven down to centres along the railway, where canning factories have been established, e.g. Omsk, &c. Petropavlovsk is a large cattle-raising centre.

There was also a flourishing dairying industry; and, before the war, the export of Siberian butter (chiefly from Barnaul and Omsk), bacon, and eggs was rapidly increasing. The area of maximum development has



Gold Output of Russian Lands

been in the Baraba Steppe or the triangle marked by Omsk and Nikolayevsk on the railway, with Semipalatinsk as an apex in the south. An incentive in this area has been the discovery of minerals.

The **mineral** wealth of this section of Siberia includes coal, iron, copper, gold, and platinum. Valuable coal-fields were being worked at Barnaul, Kusnetz, and Minusinsk; gold at Marinsk; silver, copper, platinum near Semipalatinsk; some coal, copper, graphite, and manganese at Akmolinsk. The combination of agricultural and mineral resources has led to a maximum development of railways in this region, and new lines are being projected.

**Eastern Siberia**, east of the Yenisei, differs from Western Siberia, physically, in that it lies at a higher average elevation, and economically, in that its chief value is in its mineral resources and not in agriculture, and that it looks to the Pacific and not to the Atlantic. The **mineral** resources include gold, coal, lead, silver, tin, salt, &c. Gold-bearing gravels occur in the Yenisei, Lena, and Amur basins, and outputs have been especially important in the Vitim and Olekma districts of the

Upper Lena, at Bodaibo, Olekminsk, and also near Vladivostock.

Valuable deposits of lignite also exist near Vladivostock, at Soutchan, near Irkutsk, and at Dué in Sakhalin, but the Dué field suffers from the disadvantage of difficulty of access. Silver, lead, and tin, and precious stones are found in the Sayansk and Nerchinsk Mountains. Salt-springs are numerous, and in the Trans-Baikal region salt lakes occur. The trade passes chiefly to Krasnoyarsk and Irkutsk, west of Baikal, and to Chita and Nerchinsk, east of Baikal. East of Lake Baikal, Siberia is essentially part of the Pacific hinterland, and though there is through mail and passenger traffic, the local products and imports are to and from the Pacific, passing chiefly via Port Arthur (Japanese), and Vladivostock (Russian), while a new port is being developed at Nikolayevsk near the mouth of the Amur. The cereal production in the area admits of a surplus for export, and includes oats, wheat, rye, and barley. The growing of the soya bean in the Amur region has given rise to an increasing export trade to Japan and the United Kingdom. The forests of Eastern Siberia are virtually undeveloped, the transport question being even more difficult than in Western Siberia. A large mill has been constructed at Maklakovo (near Yeniseisk). Supplies of

cedar, fir, pine, larch, and birch are available, but are only cut for local uses.

Furs form a valuable item in the export trade. Yakutsk is the great collecting-point.

### Commerce

The bulk of the Siberian export trade consisted of grain, flour, butter, meat, fish, bacon, and eggs, and furs, which passed westward to Russia over to Windau, Riga, and Petrograd for export to western Europe. Most of the wheat was sent to the United Kingdom. The eastern trade was more limited, but included minerals, some cereals, soya beans, furs, and hides. The trade with the United States is increasing.

The trade of the country is still paralysed by the Soviet regime. Whereas before the war there was a sufficient surplus of cereals to form the bulk of a large export trade, Russia is now faced with a deficit. The mineral output has fallen enormously. In gold alone the output for 1920 was approximately 1.72 tons or  $\frac{1}{3}$  of that for 1914, and of this total 1.18 tons was raised from the Lena area.

The Trans-Siberian Railway is the great commercial link of the whole area. The line has been double-tracked.

## RUSSIAN CENTRAL ASIA

The Russian lands grouped roughly as Central Asia form an area of inland drainage, sloping north from the mountain scarp of the south, and lying east of the Caspian.

The Caspian and Aral seas, both rapidly diminishing stretches of water, are all that remain of the inland sea which covered this region in recent geological times. The general desiccation is still progressing, so that the mass of the area forms poor steppe or desert. But the mountains of the south, which intercept the rainfall from the distant ocean, receive much of the moisture themselves, and from the ice-fields on the heights numerous streams rush in deep valleys through the foot-hills and, creating alluvial flats, form a fertile area along the southern border. Two streams, the Amu and the Syr Daria, with a larger volume and greater power, penetrate beyond the foot-hills, and persisting through the sandy wastes reach the Aral Sea. These two rivers form a long narrow line of fertility, and oasis cities have sprung up wherever the water is sufficient.

The resources of the area are pastoral and agricultural.

Along the steppes of the north, cattle and sheep are kept, the richest pastures being north of the Aral Sea and Lake Balkash. Pastoral areas also occur along the southern mountain border, but agriculture is more important in the southern zone, wherever there is a sufficiency of water (direct or by irrigation) for cultivation. Grain, fruits, mulberry for silk, flax, tobacco, but especially cotton, are produced in quantities.

Before the war the Russian Government was giving every encouragement to the production of cotton (i.e. by the organization of irrigation and banking and transport schemes) so that the area under cultivation

for cotton doubled in two years, and it was estimated that within a few years the area would be able to produce the entire supply of raw material required for the textile industries of Moscow.

The production of cotton in Central Asia and the Caucasus before the war (1913-14) amounted to 14,245,000 pounds,<sup>1</sup> about eleven twelfths being drawn from Central Asia. Though the production increased for a few years, it actually fell in 1920 as low as 847,000 pounds. It will require a little time yet before there will be sufficient stability and incentive to reach the pre-war standard of production.

### Sheep & Goats 16

### Horned

### Cattle 5

### Horses

4.4

Numbers of Sheep, &c., in Central Asia, 1914 (in millions)

### PRODUCTION OF COTTON IN CENTRAL ASIA (1914-15)

District.	Area (in acres).	Production (bales of 500 lb.).
Ferghana ... ..	776,011	607,515
Samarkand ... ..	96,369	72,200
Bokhara ... ..	177,540	119,163
Transcaspia ... ..	151,740	69,765
Khiva ... ..	69,940	46,943
Syr Daria ... ..	198,831	88,686

<sup>1</sup> 1000 pounds = 16 tons.

The Ferghana region (in the Syr valley) has been the most fully developed area. The particularly fertile soil brought down by the summer floods yields a fine variety of cotton; flax and tobacco are grown, and silk manufactured. Khokand and Tashkent are important cities in the valley, and on the through railways from Andijan via Orenburg to Moscow, or via Bokhara and Merv to Krasnovodsk on the Caspian. Tashkent (201,191), the political and commercial capital, has textile, leather, and metal manufactures.

Samarkand and Bokhara, in the valley of the Zerafshan, form the second important area of cultivation. Bokhara (c. 75,000) has a trade in local and imported goods (chiefly from India and Russia), and is noted for leather-work, dried fruits, &c. The Ili valley remains largely an undeveloped region, with certain leather industries. It leads to the Zungarian Gate. Khiva and Merv lie in the desert areas. Khiva (c. 4500) is noted for sheep and camels. Merv, at the point where the Murghab disappears, is a cotton and local trade centre. Karakul, on the Amu Daria, exports "astrakhan" fur.

The mineral wealth is great, but only iron, coal, and oil are worked. Oil is worked in the Emba valley in the north, and in the Ferghana valley in the south. The production in 1917 of the Emba field was c. 240,000 tons, and from the Ferghana valley c. 32,000 tons. Coal has been found near Kulja in the Ili valley.

### Governments

**Bokhara** lies between lat.  $41^{\circ} 31' - 36^{\circ} 40' N.$ , and long.  $61^{\circ} 41' - 73^{\circ} E.$ , with an area of 83,000 sq. miles, and a population of about one million. From 1873-1919 it was a Russian dependency ruled by the Amir. In August, 1919, the Amir was expelled, and a Soviet Government established. The population is Mohammedian.

**Khiva**, lying between lat.  $40^{\circ} - 43^{\circ} 40' N.$ , and long.  $57^{\circ} - 62^{\circ} 20' E.$ , is estimated as 24,000 sq. miles in extent. The population (chiefly nomadic) is about 640,000.

The State, ruled by the Khan, has owed allegiance to Russia since 1872. Since the revolution, Soviet government has been established. The population is Mohammedian.

## TRANSCAUCASIA

In November, 1917, the former Russian provinces south of the Caucasus refused to recognize the Bolshevik regime, and formed themselves into the Federal Democratic Republic of Transcaucasia. This proved a short-lived federation, and in April, 1918, the Federal Republic ceased to exist, the three largest units becoming the independent republics of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. These republics have been recognized, but the Soviet influence has penetrated into the area, and the status of Azerbaijan (in 1921) is once more unsettled.

### GEORGIA

Georgia, covering an area of about 32,770 sq. miles, is bounded by the Caucasus to the north, the Black Sea in the west, while east and south lie the territories of the republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia respectively.

The population in 1915 was returned as 3,053,345, and was densest in the Tiflis and Kutais districts. Tiflis (346,766) is the capital, and Batum (46,000 in 1913) and Sukhumi (61,974) the chief ports. Though the possession of Batum was conceded to the Georgians by the Russian Soviet Government in 1920, the Turks were still in possession in 1921.

The Georgians form an exceptionally solid racial block in a region of racial mixtures, but are characteristically divided internally into different tribal stocks, groups, and classes, which are not conducive to internal solidarity. The Emertines appear to be the most numerous and able group.

### Relief

The relief of Georgia is complicated, consisting of the Caucasus Mountains and foot-hills along the north, the intricate ranges along the Armenian frontier in the south, and between the two regions of snowy heights and forested slopes lies a wedge of lower land, forming the longitudinal valleys of the Rion, flowing westward, and the upper course of the Kur, flowing east to the Caspian.

The railway makes use of the through valley line, linking Baku on the Caspian (Azerbaijan) to Tiflis on the Upper Kur (Georgia), and, passing over the low divide, enters the Rion valley and reaches Poti on the Black Sea. The mass of the country is over 3000 feet above sea-level, and the steep slopes are scarred by torrential streams.

### Climate

The climate of Georgia varies with aspect and elevation, from damp, unhealthy lowlands to conditions favouring the development of health resorts to compare with the south of France. Broadly speaking, the climate is warm and damp, the rainfall tending to be heavier than might be expected.

Place	January mean.	July mean	Mean annual
Tiflis (1400 feet) .	32° F.	76.5° F.	55.6° F.
Sochi	40° F.	76.1° F.	56.3° F.
Batum	42° F.	75.0° F.	59.0° F.

### Resources

It has been estimated that 90 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture. The products, varying with altitude and exposure, range from the sub-tropical fruits, &c., of the coastal area to the temperate cereals and forests of the uplands. Along the slopes flanking the Black Sea, and where the lowlands are drained, maize, tobacco, and cotton are the chief crops. There are numerous orchards—with fruits for every season—tea is cultivated, and where the exposure is sheltered and sunny, there are extensive vineyards. The red wines produced, though often rough, are good.

Maize is a staple crop of the area, though wheat, barley, rye, and millet are also grown. The chief tobacco areas before the War were in the Batum, Kutais, and

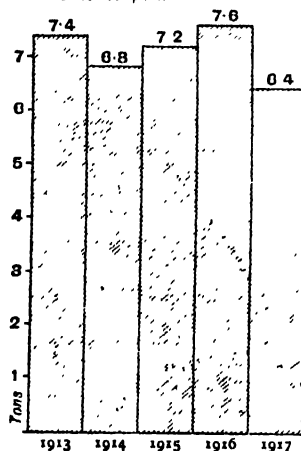
and Sukhum districts, from which large supplies were drawn for the Russian cigarette trade.

Cotton, though cultivated fairly widely, was only of importance in the Tiflis and Kutais regions.

District.	Area under cotton Acres.	Production. (bales of 500 lb.).
1914-15 { Tiflis ...	14,795	51,778
{ Kutais ...	5380	1084

The mountain slopes are heavily *forested*, and the succession of zones offers varieties of species—subtropical, deciduous, and coniferous. The most common trees are the same as in Central Europe, i.e. acacia, maple, birch, box-tree, chestnut, laurel, beech, fir, &c. The coniferous forests occupy the largest acreage, but the lack of transport facilities has prevented their development, though the numerous streams offer an abundance of power for sawing, &c.

The country also offers wide stretches of good pastures, and numbers of horses, sheep, and goats are kept. Cattle-breeding could be developed.



Production of Oil in millions of tons for five years in Baku district

The **mineral** resources include naphtha, copper ore, coal, lead, manganese ore, iron ore, pyrites, and sulphur, antimony, and zinc. The Rion River was the famous Phasis of the Greeks, but the gold is not worked now. The manganese industry is the only one of importance, located in the Tchiaturi district, and served by a railway. In 1912, the production, 277,499 tons, was exported from Poti and Batum, chiefly to the Netherlands, United States of America, and Germany. Oil-pipe lines run from the Baku fields on the Caspian to Batum and Poti. Mineral springs are numerous, and several health resorts have sprung up at the most famous ones. In the Alverdi district coal is known to exist in large quantities, but is unworked.

### Government

The constitution of the new Democratic Republic of Georgia is still in formation (1921). Executive power is

vested in a **Cabinet of Ministers**, elected from and responsible to the *Constituent Assembly*. The *Senate* is nominated by the Constituent Assembly, and can control every official of the state. The President of the Cabinet is in the meantime acting as the President of the Republic. The Constituent Assembly was elected by direct and universal suffrage on the proportional system.

### Religion and Education

The Georgians are Christians.

The elementary schools are free, and attendance is compulsory for children from five to eleven years of age. There are also preparatory (or secondary) schools, and both elementary and preparatory schools are controlled by the Ministry of Public Instruction. A university was founded at Tiflis in 1918.

## AZERBAIJAN

The former Russian provinces of Baku and Velisavetpol have constituted themselves into the independent Republic of Azerbaijan, with an area of some 40,000 sq. miles in extent, and a mixed population estimated at about four and a half millions. The Republic is bounded by the eastern extension of the Caucasus and Daghestan on the north, the Caspian on the east, Georgia and Armenia on the west, while the Persian frontier follows the Upper Aras.

### Relief

The relief, as in Georgia, consists of the long ranges of the Caucasus to the north, intricate highlands in the south, with an intervening wedge of lower land formed by the Kur valley, but opening to the Caspian instead of the Black Sea. The Kur is a larger river than the Rion, and together with the Aras it has built up a larger area of lowland, while the waters of the Caspian are retreating annually.

### Climate

The climate is more continental in character, and the rainfall is less. At Baku the January mean is about 38° F., the July mean 80° F. The rainfall in the Kur valley varies from 16 to 40 inches annually, but is very much less in the Murgan steppe, where irrigation is necessary for cultivation.

### Resources

The resources of Azerbaijan, with the exception of oil, are largely potential. The growing of maize, wheat, and other cereals, vineyards, and cotton could be developed. Under the old Russian Government the Murgan steppe, lying south of the junction of the Kur and Aras, was being systematically irrigated. In 1916 the whole of the steppe and 200,000 desiatins, i.e. 540,000 acres, of land had been irrigated, and 50,000 desiatins were under cotton. Fisheries and cattle breeding are other potentialities.

The oil-fields, centring round Baku, the capital, are

the basis of the flourishing oil industry. About four-fifths of the total production of oil in the Caucasus is from the Baku region. The output of the wells varies, but averages between 400,000,000 and 500,000,000 pounds.

## Government

The government in 1921 is still uncertain; at the moment the Soviet influence is predominant.

The different races represented in the population (Turco-Tatar, Armenian, Georgian, and Russian, &c.) adhere to different faiths, but Mohammedans appear to be most numerous.

## ARMENIA

Armenian territory was formerly partitioned between Russia, Turkey, and Persia. Theoretically, according to the Treaty of Sèvres, it is now constituted into an Independent Republic, some 80,000 sq. miles in extent. The northern frontier, starting from the Black Sea, passes a little north of Kars, Alexandropol, Lake Gokcha to the Aras valley, and this includes the rich Erivan region. The eastern frontier, separating Armenia from Persia, follows a line between Lake Van and Lake Urmia. The western boundary fronting Turkish and Mesopotamian territories runs inland from Tircboli on the Black Sea, and 50 miles west of Trebizond, west of Erzinjan, and south of Bitlis to the Persian frontier. In detail the actual frontier will probably long be disputed, but considered broadly Armenia consists of an area of intricate mountain ranges and high plateaux, averaging over 4000 feet, and the mass of which is contained in a triangular area marked by Trebizond, Erivan, and Lake Van.

## Population

Estimates of the Armenian population during the last ten years are subject to modifications due to migration, disease, and massacres. The number of Armenians in the "Republic" is probably a little over two millions, but as a race they are widely distributed in Asia Minor, and the Armenian population, inclusive of adjacent areas, might possibly approximate to eight millions.

## Relief

Armenia is the area of highest elevation in the region between the four seas. It forms the extension and junction of the Pontic and Taurus Ranges which enclose

the high Anatolian plateau of Asia Minor to the west, and eastward the long ranges are continued with the Elburz and Lauristan highlands of Persia. It forms the natural watershed, and numerous rivers, flowing in longitudinal deep-cut valleys, drain to the Black Sea, the Caspian, and the Persian Gulf.

## Resources

From earliest times the position of Armenia has rendered it debatable ground, and its history is mainly that of a series of invasions, wars, raids, and oppressive foreign rule. Thus, though the typical Armenian is a peaceful agriculturist or trader, the economic development of the country has of necessity been strictly limited. A little agriculture is carried on in the fertile valleys, but the transit trade between Persia, the Black Sea, &c., is of more value.

The country is rich in minerals, and there is an abundance of water-power. Iron, copper, lead, gold, silver, and coal are known to exist, but are unworked, except at Baiburt, where there is a little native refining of silver. The chief possible mining areas are south of Lake Van, and along the Black Sea and its hinterland.

Erzerum is the point where the routes from the Black Sea and Anatolian plateau converge for Tabriz. In addition to the caravan trade (consisting mainly of carpets) there are valuable deposits of lead, copper, and silver in the neighbourhood. Trebizond has a bad harbour, but is the Black Sea terminus of trade from Persia, &c., with undeveloped mineral wealth near.

The only railway in the country runs from Tiflis (Georgia) through Kars a little distance southward, where it branches west to Erzerum and east to Julfa.

## Government

The political arrangements in the area are still unsettled. Armenia was attempting to organize itself into an independent republic, but was attacked by the Bolsheviks, and in 1921 was virtually occupied by the Turks and the Russians.

## Religion

The majority of the Armenians are Christians, others are Mohammedans, &c.

## Education

Since 1917 it has been attempted to establish compulsory primary education.

# TURKEY IN ASIA

According to the Peace Treaties of 1920 and 1921, the Turkish territories were reduced from an area of 613,724 sq. miles to 174,900 sq. miles. The loss of territory involved a loss of nearly three-fifths of the pre-war population, which was estimated at 20,973,900. Of

this grand total only 1,891,000 were in Turkey in Europe. The population of the more recently defined Turkish domains, which, with the exception of Constantinople, are entirely in Asia, is approximately about 8,000,000.



Territories of old Turkey in Asia, 1914.		Arrangements in 1914
Anatolia	..	Remains Turkish, except for Smyrna district and a few islands which fall to Greece. Castellorizo and Dodecanese to Italy. Boundary, &c., under dispute.
Arabia	...	Kingdom of Hejaz.
Mesopotamia	...	British mandate.
Palestine	...	" "
Syria	...	French mandate.
Armenia	...	Independent republic (?).
Kurdistan	...	Unsettled.

The new Turkey is thus virtually confined to the Anatolian plateau which forms the peninsula area of Asia Minor.

### Relief

The mass of the area is a great plateau, averaging 1000-1500 feet in the west, but increasing in elevation to over 3000 feet towards the culminating heights of the mountain knot of Armenia. The plateau is cut off from the Black Sea on the north coast, and the Levant on the south coast, by the Pontic and Taurus (average 7000 feet) ranges respectively. These coastal ranges approach close to the seas, presenting steep slopes difficult of access except where the few rivers have cut gorge-like valleys seawards from the plateau through the mountain rim. The coastal plains are exceedingly restricted on both shores. Sinope and Samsun are the chief centres along the north, while in the south the plains of Pamphylia and Cilicia broaden sufficiently to offer facilities for trade, &c., at Adalia, Mersina, and Adana.

In direct contrast to the uniformity of the northern and southern coasts, the west coast presents a series of deep rias offering safe harbours and easy access to the interior plateau by way of the valleys, leading inland by comparatively gentle gradients. Whereas the Yeshil-Irmak and Kizil-Irmak run in deep ravines to the Black Sea, the Gedes and Menderes with slow-flowing waters meander in the coastal plain to the Mediterranean.

On the southern flank the Jihun and Sihun are the largest rivers. These break through the Taurus at a point east of the great Bulgar Dag (10,000 feet). The Taurus ranges are continued by the more complicated lines of the Anti-Taurus.

### Climate

There are great differences between the climatic conditions of the plateau interior and the coasts. The plateau tends to be hot in summer and cold in winter, and the rainfall varies from moderate to deficient. Along the Black Sea the winters are cold, wet, and liable to a heavy snowfall; the summers are warm.

The west and south coasts have winter rains, warm summers, but tend to be colder in winter than is usual in the same latitudes in the Mediterranean.

### Resources

Agriculture is still at a primitive stage in Turkey, but much of the area is exceedingly fertile, and capable of a far larger production.

The chief products are tobacco, cereals, cotton, figs, nuts, almonds, grapes, olives, and other fruits.

Fruits, wheat, barley, maize, rice, cotton, and liquorice are grown, especially in the western valleys; tobacco, wheat, and barley in the northern valleys.

Tobacco-growing is most important in the Samsun, Bafra, and Charchambe districts, the area under cultivation in 1918 amounting to 55,103 acres, producing 17,780,882 kilos of tobacco. The olive-oil industry was centred in towns outside Turkey, now particularly in the Arden area. Oranges and cotton are grown on the sheltered plain of Cilicia; opium is grown near Konia. On the plateau, where irrigation is possible, wheat and fruits are produced. But in the steppe area large numbers of Angora goats are kept, and the hair forms the basis of the famous carpet industries of Sivas, Konia, and Kaisaria, the dye being obtained from madder and valonia (obtained from a special series of oak).

There are wide areas of forest along the Pontic coast, consisting mainly of pine, fir, larch, oak, and cedar.

The growing of mulberry trees has been encouraged by the Turkish authorities. Brusa and Constantinople are the chief silk centres.

Anatolia is rich in minerals, but comparatively few mines are worked. Deposits of gold, silver, copper, iron, antimony, chrome, coal, salt, and petroleum, &c., are known to exist. Of these silver is found near Konia; zinc at Karasu; chrome ore at Brusa, Adana, and Konia; copper ore near Tireboli and near Diarbekr; meerschaum at Eskişehir; coal at Heraclea; mercury at Sisma. Lithographic stone is worked near Brusa. Between 6000 and 8000 tons of borax are exported from the Sea of Marmora.

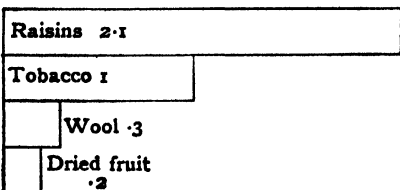
The fisheries of the Mediterranean coast could be developed.

Few manufactures are carried on in Turkey. Cotton-spinning has been started in a few of the largest centres, i.e. Adana, Magnesia, &c. Carpet-weaving is a domestic industry centring mainly at Sivas and Konia. Flour-milling is becoming important. The chief ports are Samsun, Mersina, and Adalia. Before the war most of the foreign trade passed through Smyrna, but Smyrna and the district round has theoretically passed to Greece. The full development of the valuable natural resources of the country will not be feasible until there is a better government and better transport facilities. Labour presents yet another problem. Great hopes were entertained with the inception of the Baghdad railway. The chief trade in 1913-4 was with the United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, France, and Germany. The exports are varied, but consist principally of raisins, figs, wheat, barley, silk, mohair, cotton, carpets, rugs, tobacco, olive oil, opium, sponges, and valonia. The imports are textile fabrics (especially cotton goods), coal, ironware, sugar.

T. = Temperature, degrees Fahrenheit. R = Rainfall in inches.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Smyrna (possession disputed) { T.	50	50	51	58	64	72	80	78	73	65	65	52
	R.	4	3	3	2	1	—	—	1	2	4	5

## 261



Cottons 6·8	
	Woollens ·58
	Cotton yarn ·46

**Chief Imports to Turkey from United Kingdom in 1919**  
(millions of £)

# Commercial and Statistical Survey

## LIVE STOCK IN TURKEY, 1913 AND 1919

Stock.	1913.	1919.
Sheep	18,721,550	11,200
Goats	16,463,180	2,065,000
Cattle	6,531,927	4,118,000
Asses	1,373,700	825,000
Horses	1,050,580	630,000
Camels	314,000	95,000
Mules	144,600	85,000

## Government

The administration of Turkey is liable to changes. The Sultan is the head of the state with despotic power, limited from time to time by political exigences. Various constitutions have been formulated at various periods. The Sultan virtually rules with the assistance of a cabinet. In addition there is a permanent body called the Senate, but this can only sit at the same time as the Chamber of Deputies.

## Local Government

For purposes of local government the territories are divided into vilayets (or provinces), subdivided into sanjaks (or smaller provinces), and further into "kazas" (or districts). When necessary, there are even lesser divisions. Each vilayet is administered by a governor-general, representing the Sultan, and a council. Lesser

authorities in the smaller divisions are under the control of the Vali or Governor-General.

NOTE.—Under the guidance of Mustafa Kemal Pasha and his party, a Grand National Assembly gathered at Angora in 1920. The assembly claimed for itself all executive and legislative power, but still declared its allegiance to the Sultan. The actual executive power was deputed to a Cabinet or body of Commissioners. The Assembly refuses to recognize the Treaty of Sèvres.

## Religion

The state religion is Mohammedanism, of which the Sultan, as Caliph, is the supreme head. The chief Church dignitary is the Sheikh-ul-Islam.

The majority of the population is Mohammedan. The Ulema form a separate class in the community with special charges connected with the mosques, &c.

## Education

Elementary education is nominally compulsory, and is given in various state and local schools. There are also a number of somewhat higher schools for boys, and similar schools for girls are being opened. There is a university at Constantinople. In addition to the various state schools, there are schools attached to the mosques, special Mohammedan schools, theological seminaries, and schools supported by several Christian missions. The general standard of education is low.

# CYPRUS

The Island of Cyprus, 40 miles off the coast of Asia Minor, has an area of about 3584 sq. miles, or about two-thirds the size of Yorkshire. The population is increasing, and in 1920 was approximately about 300,000.

Carobs	2.5
Wheat & barley	2.0
Wine	1.25
Raisins	1.22
Cotton	1.0

Chief Exports in 1919 amounting in value to £100,000 and over

The island consists of a long plain—the Mesorea—flanked by mountains which cut off moisture from the interior. The island tends to be dry everywhere, but while the climate of the plain is trying, the hills are bracing and healthy. With irrigation the plain is fertile, and cereals, carobs, cotton and sesame, olives and grapes are grown. Wool and leather are obtained from the limestone ranges, while the southern hills are well

forested. In 1920 there were some 288,000 sheep, and 210,000 goats in the country. Copper-mining has been restarted. Asbestos is also worked. Gypsum, terra

Cotton goods	Cotton yarn etc.	2.2
Leather & Leather goods		1.6
Tobacco leaf		.9
Sugar		.86
Olive oil		.63
Silk & Woollen goods		.62

Chief Imports in 1919, value in £100,000

umbra, and marble are found. Salt is obtained from the plain.

Trade has steadily been developing. Nicosia is the capital, Larnaka the chief port, Famagusta the best natural harbour, but unhealthy.

The chief exports are carobs, wheat and barley, wines and raisins; the imports are more varied, but include cotton goods and yarns, leather, tobacco, sugar, and

other provisions, machinery, &c. There is a narrow-gauge railway in operation between Famagusta *via* Nicosia to Evrychou. The sponge fisheries along the coast are being developed.

### Government

Cyprus was annexed in 1914 by Britain, though it was already being administered by the British previous to that date.

The island is under the control of a High Commissioner. There is an Executive Council, and also a Legislative consisting of eighteen members. Twelve of

these members are elected for periods of five years, three representing the Mohammedan voters, and nine others.

### Religion

The Christians of the Autocephalous Church of Cyprus form the most numerous body in the community, the Mohammedans stand second.

### Education

There are numerous elementary schools, 501 for Greek-Christians, 231 for Moslems, 4 for Armenians, and 3 for Maronites. In addition there are a few higher schools for boys and girls.

## SYRIA

Syria was recognized as an independent state in 1920, and placed under a mandate assigned to France. The boundaries were delimited in the Treaty of Sèvres, 1920, and modified in 1921. According to the agreement, Syria possesses the coast along the Mediterranean between Turkey in the north and Palestine in the south. The northern land frontier follows a more or less direct line along the Baghdad railway from the coast to Jeziret-Ibn-Omar on the Tigris. The southern frontier begins at Ras Nakura, and approximating to various watersheds

### Climate

The climate varies with height and distance from the sea. Whereas the coastal strip has a typical Mediterranean climate with winter rains, and the mountains are sufficiently high and near to the sea to receive heavy falls of snow, the rainfall rapidly diminishes eastward until desert conditions prevail on the Arabian border. The following are the monthly temperature and rainfall figures for Damascus:—

		T. = Temperature, degrees Fahrenheit												R. = Rainfall in inches.											
		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.												
Damascus ... ..	T.	55	55	58	65	73	80	80	80	78	73	65	58												
	R.	2	2	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	4												

passes south to the Sea of Galilee, then makes a sweeping curve to the nearest point on the Euphrates (Abu Kemal), some fifty miles west of Anah. Crossing the Euphrates, the frontier runs north-east to include the western Khabur region, towards Jeziret-Ibn-Omar, where four frontiers meet.

The area is estimated as about 60,000 sq. miles, with a small population (chiefly Arabic) of rather less than three millions. The foreign element in the population is very mixed though limited in actual numbers.

### Relief

Syria is a high plateau (1500–3000 feet) sloping gradually into the Syrian desert region of the east, and broken by higher ridges. Eastward the plateau rises to the roughly parallel lines of the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges, which approach close to the coast in the Beirut and Tripoli hinterland. The Lebanon Mountains, rising to 10,000 feet, are separated from the Anti-Lebanon by the valley drained by the Orontes and the Leontes, and the line of weakness is continued southward by the Rift Valley marked by the Jordan and the Dead Sea. A triangular area of lower elevation lies between the southern plateau and the heights along the northern frontier.

### Resources

It has been estimated that only ten per cent of the total area is cultivated, though the bulk of the population is engaged in agriculture and cattle-breeding.

Cereals, vegetables, and fruits are grown. Of the fruits the most important are the olive, vine, and orange. Wheat is the chief cereal crop, and quantities are produced in the Hauran district. Other products include tobacco (chiefly near Latakia, Aleppo, and Damascus), cotton, maize, lentils, beans, and sesame. The mulberry tree is grown widely. The mineral wealth is not known. Salt and iron are worked near Aleppo. Iron has been worked in northern Lebanon, coal is known to exist in south Lebanon.

The exports before the war were raw silk, sheep, and cattle, oranges and lemons, soap, wool, tobacco, and sesame—chiefly to France. The imports were cotton goods, provisions (sugar, rice, flour, coffee), metals, and machinery.

The productions of Syria, though of value, do not indicate the real importance of the area. Since the dawn of history and before, Syria, together with Palestine, has been the highway of trade and of invasion between Egypt on the west and Mesopotamia on the east. Its true im-

portance is due to, and commensurate with, its importance as the vital link between these two lowlands with their ancient civilizations and future potentialities. The cities of Aleppo, Homs, Damascus inland, Alexandretta, Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre on the coast, though centres of cultivation, local markets, with developing industries, yet owe their initial and lasting importance in proportion to the advantage of their sites on the great trade routes of the interior.

Aleppo, in the north, controlled the old caravan routes from the Euphrates to Cicilia, or the sea, or south to Egypt. It is now a railway junction.

Damascus (population 250,000), manufactures cotton and silk tissues and soap, is the focus of the south. Situated in an oasis with its fruits and its wheatfields, Damascus controls the main highway north and south (now used by the main railway), while caravan routes pass eastwards to the Euphrates. Alexandretta is the chief port in the north, Beirut in the south.

### Government

Syria is a French mandatory area, and for purposes of administration has been divided into four territories.

- (a) The Government of Aleppo.
- (b) Territory of the Alaourtes
- (c) Government of the Great Lebanon.
- (d) Government of Damascus.

The Great Lebanon division was declared a state in 1920.

### Religion

The mass of the population is Moslem. There are some Christians.

### Education

Various missions and sects have elementary and higher schools. There is a Jesuit university at Beirut.

## PALESTINE

In 1917 Palestine was conquered and occupied by British forces, and in 1920, according to the decision of the Supreme Council, the mandate for Palestine was accorded to Great Britain. Palestine is a small oblong strip of territory, bounded by the Mediterranean on the west, the Syrian desert on the east, and marked off by less definite feature lines from Syria in the north, Hejaz and the Sinai peninsula in the south.

Under the Turkish regime Palestine included a strip of country beyond the Jordan, but the area of British occupation—some 9000 sq. miles—is confined to Palestine west of the Jordan.

In 1919 the population was 647,850, of whom about 79 per cent were Moslems; but thousands of Jewish immigrants are entering the country. In 1920 about 10,000 arrived.

### Relief

Concentrated in the narrow strip between sea and desert, there are three distinct natural regions. Along the low unbroken coast is (a) the maritime plain of Philistia and Sharon. Separating the maritime plain and the Rift Valley are (b) the highlands of Judea and Samaria. In the east is the (c) Rift Valley, drained by the Jordan, linking the series of lakes. Beyond the Rift Valley is an eastern range, which fronts the wide wastes of the deserts beyond.

The Jordan valley forms one of the most extraordinary features in the world. It marks the end of a great line of faulting, which can be traced from the flanks of the Lebanon Mountains, south through the Gulf of Akaba, the Red Sea, to the great lakes of Africa. It forms a great depression, which falls from sea-level to 1273 feet below sea-level in the Dead Sea, while the bottom of the Dead Sea is probably another 1300 feet deeper. Four streams join and form the head-waters of the Jordan River, which is in Syria. The river first winds in amongst the floating vegetation of the great morass of

the Huli, but falls by a series of cataracts and waterfalls to the lower level of the Lake of Galilee, which lies in a great rock basin. Leaving the Lake of Galilee, the river winds southward through a valley of varying width, and falls to the still lower level of the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea is about 47 miles long and 10 miles wide. The water is extraordinarily saline, the percentage being between 24 and 33 per cent, or about five times as salt as the ocean waters.

The highlands, of porous limestone, vary in height between 1500 and 3000 feet, and fall precipitously to the Jordan valley. The pass of Shechem marks a break where the mountains are continued seaward by the Mount Carmel (1810 feet) upland, north of which lies the plain of Esdraelon, which forms the natural link between the interior valley and the sea, and separates the mountains of the north from the highlands of the south. The highest points are Tell Asur (3318 feet) near Bethel, and Ebal (3077 feet).

### Climate

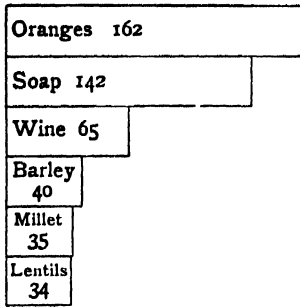
The marked differences of altitude concentrated in so small an area cause marked differences of climatic conditions.

The coastal plain has a Mediterranean climate, but the summer temperatures are rather higher, the maximum being normally between 80° and 90° F. The calm air and the clear skies cause extremely heavy dews, and these, together with the refreshing "land and sea" breezes characteristic of the hot season, modify conditions. The rainfall is from 28 to 32 inches. The mountains, subject to greater extremes, receive snow. Tropical conditions prevail in the Rift Valley, which is exceedingly unhealthy. The coolest months are January and February, but in the summer 118° F. has been registered, and the mean maximum daily temperature has been recorded at 94° for June, 99° for July, and 100° in August. The rainfall is much lower than on the coast.

## Resources

The full development of Palestine is still largely potential.

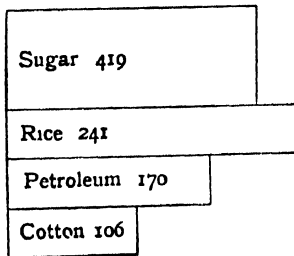
There is ample evidence everywhere indicating its ancient prosperity, but it will require some time before the destruction caused by time and misgovernment can



Chief Exports from Palestine, 1920, in £100,000

be made good. Many new colonies of Jews have been started to develop the country, and some of these have been successful.

Cereals, cotton, and fruits are cultivated on the plains. Orange plantations flourish in the hinterland of Jaffa, which carries on a large export trade. Wheat and barley are winter crops, millet is the chief summer crop. The



Imports into Palestine in 1920, £100,000

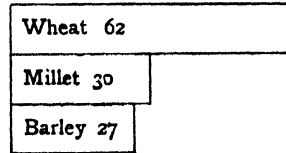
fruits include grapes, figs, olives, melons, &c. Palms, oranges, and bananas thrive in the tropical conditions of the Rift Valley. On the pastures sheep and goats are grazed.

Rock salt is found in abundance in the Jordan valley and round the Dead Sea, where sulphur may be obtained. Gypsum is found at Mount Usdum and near Melhamia. There are indications of the existence of supplies of oil.

The most important industries are centred in the Jewish colonies. These include wine-making, soap-making at Nablus and Haifa, olive oil at Nablus, Akkar, and near Jaffa.

The Government is attempting to re-afforest the hills, which present a barren surface. The chief exports are oranges, soap, wines, barley, millet, and lentils. The imports are mainly sugar, rice, cotton, and petroleum.

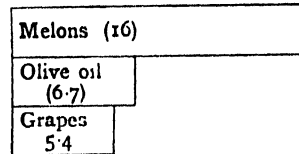
Most of the foreign trade passes through Jaffa, Haifa, Acre, and Gaza. Haifa is the natural outlet of the rich wheatlands of the Hauran, and the improvement of rail-



Production of Cereals in Palestine in 1920 in millions of kilos

ways and harbour works should appreciable increase its value as a port.

The growing towns in the interior are situated at advantageous points on the railways and routes, e.g. Nablus, Jerusalem, Bethel, and Hebron—old strongholds in the Judean highlands. Jerusalem (population about 60,000) is of strategic importance, and marks the point



Relative Production of chief crops in millions of kilos

where the highway from the Levant makes for the Rift Valley. Strategically, Palestine is the most vitally important section of the "highway out of Egypt to Assyria", and its possession is of paramount value to the control of the Suez route to the East.

## Government

For purposes of administration, Palestine has been divided into seven districts, under the control of a High Commissioner, but the appointment of a Jew to this post was a fundamental blunder.

It is the aim and intention of the British Government to make Palestine the Jewish national home, without, however, prejudicing non-Jewish communities within the area. Forms of government have not—in 1921—been completed, but an Advisory Council has been appointed by the High Commissioner. The Jewish section of the population, after convening an Elected Assembly, elected a National Committee to represent them.

## ARABIA

Arabia forms a vast plateau peninsula, stretching from lat.  $13^{\circ}$  to  $33^{\circ}$  N., and between long.  $35^{\circ}$  and  $60^{\circ}$  E. Though the coasts have been known slightly for a long period, the interior remains largely unexplored.

The peninsula appears to be a plateau not less than 2000 feet above sea-level, which slopes gradually to the lowland of Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf on the east, but rises to a line of heights bordering the Red Sea which reach a maximum elevation (over 10,000 feet) in Yemen in the south-west. The whole of the northern part of the peninsula is occupied by the rainless desert tract of the Nefud; in the south is the impassable Arabian desert; but between the two occur certain highlands which attract sufficient moisture to give rise to a number of flourishing oases and steppe pastures. This is the famous Nejd region.

The coasts of Arabia are everywhere remarkably uniform, with few harbours, and the Red Sea littoral is hampered by shoals and coral-growth. The coastal strips differ entirely from the interior in being as a rule well-watered and fertile, though limited in extent.

## Climate

The position of Arabia—athwart the Northern Tropic and between two vast land masses—has made desert conditions supreme in the peninsula. The interior is characterized everywhere by great ranges of temperature and a deficiency of rainfall. The summer temperatures are, however, modified by the altitude of the plateau, but the coastal regions boast some of the hottest places in the world. The coastal strips differ also in that a slight rainfall is precipitated by the highlands. The rains generally occur in summer or early autumn, and are heaviest in Yemen.

## Population

The population of Arabia is estimated as between five and six millions, consisting of numerous tribal communities, nomadic or half-settled. The oases form the settlements, but the typical desert dweller is a wanderer with his sheep and belongings.

## Resources

In such an area resources must be limited. The oases form centres of cultivation, producing cereals and fruits, the most important fruit being the date-palm. The pastoral tribes keep sheep, horses, and camels.

The chief divisions in the country are the following:—

**The Kingdom of Hejaz** runs the length of the Red Sea littoral from the Medina Salih in the north to the confines of Asir and Yemen in the south, and includes the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina. Its eastern desert frontier remains undefined. The sacred cities make the state one of the most important areas of the peninsula, and form, together with the railway, the main asset of the region. While the railway from Damascus

to Medina brings an endless stream of pilgrims from the north, Jidda is the port for the Red Sea route.

The area of the kingdom is estimated as about 100,000 sq. miles, with a population of 750,000. It is recognized as a free and independent state ruled by a king.

**Asir** is a principate separating Hejaz from Yemen. It is a little-known territory ruled by a powerful family. The capital is at Sabyiah.

**The Imanate of Yemen.**—The highlands of Yemen approach close to the coast, and are watered by feeble monsoons as they are attracted along the trough of the Red Sea. The resultant rainfall is invaluable on the rich volcanic soil, and peaches, grapes, figs, and dates are grown. By means of intensive terrace culture, the maximum use of the ground is made. The altitude modifies the tropical latitude, and the combination of moisture with moderate heat favours the growing of coffee, which is the chief product. On the western flank of the mountains the damp mists rising from the lower ground are a valuable source of moisture for the higher terraces.

Hodeida (40,000) and Mocha are the chief ports. Sanaa (25,000) is the capital.

The population is divided between the sects of the Zeidites and the Shafites. The Jewish colonies are important.

**Aden** stands on a small peninsula, while the protectorate extends some distance inland. Perim lies at the entrance to the Red Sea. Aden and Perim are important coaling stations.

Aden produces little, but it controls a comparatively large transshipment trade in cotton and cotton goods, grain, hides, tobacco, coffee, sugar, gums, and fruits.

The Kuria Muria Islands are attached to Aden. The five islands total about 1382 sq. miles, with a population of about 12,000, mostly pastoral or engaged in fishing. The exports are gums, dates, and cattle and goats. The islands were acquired by treaty in 1876.

The **Hadramaut** region is little known. Makalla, the one port of the area, exports gums and frankincense.

**Oman** is a fairly extensive territory in the south-east corner of the peninsula, and is ruled by a sultan. The area is estimated as about 82,000 sq. miles, but the total population is probably less than 500,000. Arabs predominate, but negroes are numerous, and there is a distinct infusion of negro blood in many of the Arab tribes.

The resources of the country are strictly limited. The annual rainfall is only about five inches, so that irrigation is necessary nearly everywhere for cultivation. Methods of cultivation are primitive, and the general insecurity of life and property is a further disadvantage. Inland, camels are bred in large numbers, but the chief product is the date-palm. The date is the staple food, and is by far the most important export. Everywhere where water is to be obtained the date-palm is grown, and large groves exist both along the coast, e.g. in the Bahtinah region, and in the mountain valleys inland. The export

trade centres at Maskat, and about 15,000 tons of dates (valued at £120,000) were shipped annually in steamers before 1914. This does not include the cargoes of the numerous native craft from Yemen, Zanzibar, &c. The export trade in dates is chiefly with India, but a specially selected variety, grown in the Wadi Semail valley, is exported to the United States of America.

Other exports include other fruits, fish, hides, and skins; the imports, rice, coffee, piece-goods, and sugar. Though the mass of all the trade is with India, there is a considerable interchange with Persia. Caravans run inland, but the trading is chiefly by sea.

The Sultan is the nominal ruler, but the interior is generally in a state of turbulent unrest, and his authority is virtually limited to the coast. Inland, an Imam, elected a few years ago, has gained the real power. A British Consul resides at Maskat.

The population is Mohammedan.

The **Sultanate of Koweit** has a certain strategic value in its relation to Mesopotamia. The Sultan is subsidized by the British Government, and receives a Political Agent at his Court.

The **Emirate of Nejd and Hasa**.—The lines of oases which constitute the Nejd region divide the two desert areas. Cereals and dates are grown, but the country is most famous for its breeds of horses, camels, and asses. One caravan route from Mecca follows the central Kasim valley to Koweit, another branches northward

through the Nefud desert to Baghdad. The capital is Riyadh. In 1913 the Emir expelled the Turk from Hasa and extended his rule to Hofuf. The total population may be 280,000.

The Emirate of Jebel Shammar formerly belonged to Nejd, but in the nineteenth century it achieved its independence from its southern neighbour. The capital is at Hail. The population may be about 200,000.

The **Bahrein Islands** lie 20 miles off the coast of El Hasa in the Persian Gulf. The islands are well populated with several comparatively large towns. The capital is Manama (35,000). The population is mixed, being composed of Arabs, Persians, and Indians. Dates are grown, and the islands are noted for a fine breed of donkeys, but the primary importance of the group is as the centre of the famous pearl fisheries of the Persian Gulf. In 1920 the pearl export amounted to £294,000. In addition, a flourishing entrepôt trade is carried on. The advantages of a good harbour, with a regular service of steamers, have resulted in the selection of the islands as a point of transhipment for the mainland, and the greater proportion of the trade with the Nejd and Hasa regions passes through Bahrein. The foreign trade is mainly in pearls, rice, cotton goods, coffee, tea, sugar, dates.

The islands are ruled by a native chief. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf or a Political Agent represents the Government of India.

## MESOPOTAMIA

Mesopotamia (an oblong block some 143,000 sq. miles in extent) stretches south eastwards from the outlying heights of the bleak Armenian Mountains to the warm waters of the Persian Gulf. Leaving the dark ravines and rocky gorges of the northern mountains, the Euphrates and the Tigris swing through a vast level lowland, bounded on the east by the parapet of the Zagros Mountains, and on the west by the monotonous levels of the continuous desert sands.

The Euphrates is the longer river, but the less important. It rises in two headstreams far northward in amongst the Armenian heights, and zigzags westward to within sixty miles of Aleppo, before it finally swings south-eastward, and after passing through long stretches of cataracts and falls branches into numerous courses and shallow swamps as it reaches its true delta below Hit. The Tigris also rises in Armenia. Its course, though shorter, has the great advantage of receiving important tributaries from the Zagros ranges in the lowland section of its course. These tributaries—the Zab, the Adhem, the Diala, and the Kerkla—maintain the level of the waters, and also prove lines of approach on the Persian flank. An enormous quantity of mud is brought down to the plain. The two rivers approach to within thirty-five miles of

each other about lat. 33° N., but do not unite until a point (Magi) a little north of Basra, lat. 31°. Below Basra the Karun River enters the wide marshes of the delta on the left. The delta is still gaining on the Persian Gulf, and Basra may in time be inland, as Eridu and Amara do at the present day.

Only north of 35° N. is the uniform level of the lowland broken anywhere by rising ground, but east of Mosul is a pebbly expanse, which rises northward to the mountains.

### Population

The population in 1920 was 2,849,282, about 90 per cent of which belonged to the Sunni and Shiah sects.

### Climate

Mesopotamia is characterized by large diurnal and annual ranges of temperature, and a scanty and variable rainfall. The average rainfall, 6-8 inches annually, is confined to the winter months, when the temperature is sufficiently high to ripen wheat. The summer months are rainless and oppressively hot. The following are the average temperatures, degrees F., and rainfall for twelve months at Baghdad:—

		T = Temperature, degrees Fahrenheit					R. = Rainfall in inches.						
		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Baghdad ...	{ T.	49	51	60	69	80	89	93	93	86	77	62	53
	{ R.	1	2	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2



### Resources

Though Mesopotamia was formerly a kingdom of fabulous wealth and fertility, at the present day it consists for the most part of wide stretches of swamp, steppe, and desert, of buried cities, and uncontrolled waters. A few areas of limited cultivation, a few old cities, are all that now survive of the ancient glories. The cause of the change is due to the fact that the prosperity of the "land of the two rivers" is entirely founded on the water-supply. The scanty rainfall, which the country receives, is absolutely inadequate for agricultural needs, yet wherever water can be brought from the two perennial rivers, the extraordinarily fertile soil can produce rich crops of cereals and luscious fruits. Under the long years of Turkish dominion and maladministration the famous irrigation canals fell into disrepair, and gradually the prosperity passed away. Before the war the Turks began a scheme of reconstruction, and several barrages and dams and canals were built to regulate the flow of the river from lat. 34° N. southwards. Under the British mandate a systematic irrigation scheme is being undertaken so as to restore to the country its ancient fertility. While the rivers are to be utilized primarily for irrigation purposes, the railway is to be made the main outlet for the products. At present day the chief product is the date, but with irrigation vast quantities of wheat, barley, rice, and cotton, and tropical fruits can be grown, while the steppe can support millions of sheep, and there are possibilities of horse- and cattle-breeding. In addition to the agricultural potentialities, oil has been found. Wells are being worked at Gazara, near Mosul, and at Mandali, near Baghdad. Springs are known to exist in the DIALA and ADHEM basins. Asphalt deposits occur at Hit.

The great cities of the past and the cities of the present day—and probably of the future—tend to cluster round three foci, Mosul in the north, Baghdad in the centre, and

Basra in the south. Mosul stands at a point where the uplands and the mountains approach close to the Tigris, and several caravan routes intersect, and is the objective of the railway from the west. It also marks the head of navigation for small vessels. On the opposite bank stands ancient Nineveh.

Baghdad, Ctesiphon, Seleucia, and Babylon mark the central focus where the two rivers approach each other. Baghdad is the natural centre of the kingdom, but also has the advantage of standing at a point where the caravan route from Syria and Asia Minor passes south to the Persian Gulf, where the DIALA offers a natural route through the Zagros ranges to the plateau; and, when the canal linking the Tigris and Euphrates is once more in operation, it will command both waterways.

Basra is a large town, occupying the nearest site at present to the open sea. It stands in place of Ur, Eridu, and Amara, the ports of ancient kingdoms. It is the clearing-house and distributing centre of the country, and is now linked by rail (via the Euphrates) to Baghdad. It is suggested that Koweit may be made a terminus in the future. The chief exports from Mesopotamia under Turkish rule were dates, grain, and carpets. The chief imports were cotton goods (50 per cent) and sugar. Most of the trade was with Persia.

### Government

According to the treaty of 1920 Mesopotamia was recognized as an Independent State, and the mandate entrusted to Great Britain. The form of government is being drafted.

### Education

Government schools are being rapidly established (nearly in 1921), and a survey school was opened.

## PERSIA

Persia covers the western portion of the plateau of Iran, which stretches from the Armenian mountains in the west, to the Sulaimans on the east. Some 628,000 sq. miles in extent, it consists of a central area of plateau rimmed by high mountains, and two outlying lowlands. (a) The central plateau is divided by a ridge of higher land into the Dasht-i-Kavir or Great Salt Desert in the north, and the Dasht-i-Lut or Great Sand Desert in the south. Both of these deserts are devoid of vegetation, and form one of the most desolate regions in the world. In the Dasht-i-Kavir are wide stretches of solid rock-salt. (b) The Elburz and the Khorasan Mountains mark the northern edge of the plateau. The Elburz form a single range, falling precipitously to the outlying lowland along the Caspian Sea. In the volcanic peak of Mount Demavend the mountains attain their highest point, c. 19,000 feet above sea-level. The Caspian slope is well forested, and scarred by numerous streams, but the southern plateau slope is bare and rocky. The Khorasan Mountains consist of two lower chains separated by a long valley leading east and west. (c) The Caspian littoral is long

and narrow but fertile. (d) The western border of the plateau is marked by the series of ranks of limestone ridges, which are generally grouped as the Zagros Mountains. They stretch from the Lake Van region to the Persian Gulf, with an average width of 200 miles, and attain a maximum height of 12,800 feet in Mount Kuh-i-Rang. Communication through this formidable barrier is only possible where the rivers have threaded their way through the numerous lines of mountain to the Mesopotamian plain along the west. (e) In the south-west the Karun River basin forms a second area of outlying lowland. Along the eastern frontier the western mountains curve eastwards to the mountains of Baluchistan, and the central deserts and depressions are carried eastward by the Sistan depression.

### Climate

Persia has broadly three climatic divisions. (a) The central plateau is characterized by extremes of winter cold, summer heat, and deficiency of rainfall, the diurnal changes of temperature being accompanied by valuable

dews; (b) the Caspian flank ranges from temperate to sub-tropical conditions, according to altitude, but has a heavy rainfall; (c) the coast lands of the Persian gulf are exceedingly unhealthy, experiencing long spells of damp heat, though the rainfall is small.

## Resources and Trade

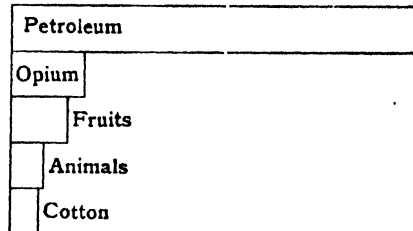
The resources of Persia vary with the different regions. Only a small percentage of the country is under cultivation, as agriculture depends on irrigation. But where water can be obtained, two and even three crops can be raised annually. The products include wheat, barley, rice, opium, cotton, tobacco, lucerne, cloves, peas, beans, and various oil-producing plants (linseed, castor oil &c.). The climate, especially in the highlands, is very favourable to fruit-growing, and excellent apricots, peaches, nectarines, pears, grapes, plums, cherries, figs, and almonds are grown. Along the Caspian littoral crops of rice, sugar, cotton, and fruit are grown, and, though the climate on the lowland is malarious, the production could be vastly increased with any encouragement. The forests form a potential source of wealth, containing supplies of oak, beech, and boxwood. The Russians have been cutting boxwood from these forests almost at will for many years. The chief ports are Resht and Barfurush. Lake Urmia region forms another centre of cultivation, and the chief crops are tobacco, wheat, and maize, and cotton. Tabriz is the natural centre, and has industries in leather, silk, and gold and silver ware. Meshed, in the Hen-Rud valley, among wheat-fields and orchards, manufactures shawls, silks, velvets, and carpets. It is the sacred city of the Shah sect.

Teheran, at the foot of Mount Demavend, on the great east-west route, intermediate between Meshed and Tabriz, is the capital. It is also the objective of routes south-east to Mesopotamia, and south to Bander Abbas and the Persian Gulf.

Many centres of cultivation are dotted through the fertile valleys between the ridges of the limestone ranges of the Zagros. These draw their waters from the numerous underground supplies and mountain streams. The most important cities on these intermont levels are Kermanshah and Hamadan, on the main route between Baghdad and Teheran. Along the eastern flank of the mountains are a series of oasis cities—Kum, Kashan, Ispahan, Yezd, and Kerman. Ispahan is the old capital. Kerman is the route centre of the south as Teheran is of the north. The Karun River lowland, though an excessively unhealthy region, is producing cotton and cereals. Mohammerah is the chief port. At Abadan are important oil refineries. There is steamer traffic to Shustar, and a route links the Karun to Ispahan. There are no good harbours on the Persian Gulf, but the chief ports are Bushire and Bander Abbas. Shiraz, in the hinterland of Bushire, is famous for its roses and perfumes. From Shiraz routes run to Ispahan and Yezd. Bander Abbas is the southern outlet for Kerman, famous for its shawls, carpets, &c. Lingah is a pearl-fishing centre. On the grassland, flocks of sheep and goats are kept by the nomadic population.

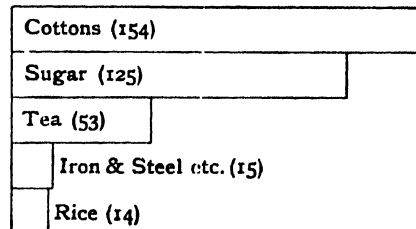
The mineral wealth of Persia is not fully developed. Oil is the most valuable mineral product exported—the

largest quantities at present being exported from the Karun region. An oil-bearing district is reported in the Caspian area. Iron, lead, copper, exist in abundance in the north-west; iron and coal deposits have been discovered in the Elburz. In Khorasan are turquoise mines, copper, coal, and salt. Kerman in the south produces copper, lead, manganese, borax, turquoise, iron, mercury, &c. Along the Persian Gulf naphtha and rock salt are the chief minerals.



Chief Exports from Persia, 1918-9, on proportional basis

The exports are petroleum, fruits, opium, cotton, silk, hides, skins, and carpets; the imports are cotton goods, sugar, tea, rice, iron and steel goods, &c. Before the war four sevenths of the total trade was with Russia, one-fourth with the British Empire, and only eleven-sixteenths with Turkey. In 1919, however, 70 per cent of the total trade was with Great Britain. Persian wheat is valuable for mixing with English wheat. A large proportion of the tobacco goes to the eastern Mediterranean.



Chief Imports into Persia in 1918-9 in thousands of krans

Formerly the cotton was absorbed by Russia. Future developments depend on the solution of the two great problems of Persia—irrigation and transport.

## Government

The Shâh is virtually the absolute ruler in Persia. He is assisted by a Cabinet. There is also a National Council (Majlis), in which is supposedly vested the legislative power, but it has never been effectively constituted.

The country is divided into thirty-three provinces under Governors-General (usually called Hâkim), who are responsible to the Central Government for the administration in the provinces. These may appoint their own Lieutenant-Governors when the provinces are subdivided into districts. Each town has a mayor (Kalântar), &c.,

and each quarter or village a chief (Kedkhodâ). According to a law of 1907, there are elections for rural and town councils.

### Religion

About eight and a half millions of the total population belong to the Shîah sect of Mohammedanism. Other sects and religions represented in any number are the Sunnî, Parsîs, Jews, Armenians, and Nestorians. The

Persian priesthood is very powerful. Anyone who can read the Koran and interpret it may act as a mullah or priest. The chief or leading priest resides at Najaf or Kerbela.

### Education

The mass of the population is content with being able to read the Koran, but schools on European lines are being opened, and female education being also undertaken.

## AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan (245,000 sq. miles), lying between lat. 29° and 38° N., and approximately between long. 61° and 72° E., is a mountainous, difficult area, more of strategic than of any economic value to the outside world. The two states of Afghanistan and Baluchistan—between the Pamirs and the sea—control the two feasible routes of invasion or trade into India along its only vitally vulnerable land frontier.

Population is estimated at about 6,380,000. About one-third of this total is included in the two leading Afghan tribes of the Durrani and Ghilzâis.

### Relief

Afghanistan consists of a triangle of highland continued westward from the Pamirs by the Hindu-Kush, Koh-i-Baba, Koh-i-Safed, and the Hazara highlands, with an average elevation never below 6000 feet, and furrowed by ranges unbroken (except in one place) by passes under 10,000 feet. In the south-west the highland slopes to the low Sistan swamp and Helmand Desert. The core of the country is the Koh-i-Baba mass, from which all the great rivers flow—the Heri Rud and the Murghab north to the plains of (Russian) Turkestan; the Helmand south-west to the Sistan depression and desert on the Persian frontier; the Kabul south-east through the foot-hills to the Punjab plains on the Indian frontier. The importance of the few passes in the difficult mountain mass has led to the rise of three distinct foci on the three flanks of the triangle. Herat, on the Heri Rud, commands the approach from the north-west, where the railway from Merv has reached Kushk on the frontier; Kandahar, on a tributary of the Helmand, controls the south-west, i.e. the route from Persia, and south to

India via the Bolan Pass. But Kabul in the north-east corner of the Kabul River is the chief focus. The Bamian and Kawak passes give access to the north, the Sher Dahan south to Kandahar, while the famous Khyber Pass leads eastwards direct into India.

### Resources

Though the mass of the area is barren, there are good pastures on the lower mountain slopes, and fertile plains in the valleys. In most parts of the country there are two harvests, and wheat, barley, rice, and millet are grown. Fruits (apples, pears, almonds, peach, quince, apricot, plum, cherry, grape, fig, and mulberry) are grown in abundance, and form a large item in the local food-supplies, and, when dried, in the export trade. The castor-oil and asafoetida plants are also grown. The mineral wealth includes copper, lead, iron, gold, and precious stones. Gold is worked near Kandahar, copper in the north, and Badashan was noted for its precious stones. There are a few local industries at Kabul.

The chief exports are horses, cattle, wool, hides, silk, fruit, vegetables, grain, drugs, spices, and tobacco. The imports are cotton goods, sugar, tea, and dyes. The chief trade is with India, but there is also a regular trade with Bokhara. There are no railways in Afghanistan.

### Government

Afghanistan is ruled by a hereditary prince, whose power varies with his character, abilities, and circumstances. The area is divided into four provinces "administered" by governors.

Weaklings die young in this Buffer State.

## BALUCHISTAN

Baluchistan (134,638 sq. miles), like Afghanistan, is a mountainous country, but consists of a central area of depression flanked by mountains on every side. Successive ranges, running from north to south, separate it from Persia on the west and India on the east, and belts of highland running east and west separate it from Afghanistan on the north, and render access difficult to the

Arabian Sea to the south. On the eastern frontier, the Sulaiman and Kirthar ranges are separated by the wide gulf of lowland which penetrates far into the mountainous Baluchis territory, and leads to the difficult Bolan Pass. A railway has been pushed north-westwards from the plain of the Indus, through Quetta, the political capital, to Chaman on the frontier, and could be quickly carried

to Kandahar if need arose. An alternative route passes from Bolan via Harnai to Bostan, and a branch line is carried westward to Nushki.

### Population

According to the census returns of 1911, the population was 834,700. There are numerous different races represented, but the chief are the Brahui, Pathan, and Baloch.

### Resources

Neither the extreme climate with its uncertain rainfall nor the nature of the relief of the area is conducive much to agriculture. The products are similar to those of Afghanistan, the chief cereals being wheat, barley, millet, lucerne, and rice; while fruits—grapes, apricots, apples, peaches, &c.—are also grown. Panjgur is noted for its dates. The Indian Government is encouraging both the agriculture and horse-breeding.

The mineral wealth is little developed, but includes iron, lead, coal, salt, asbestos, chromite, petroleum, &c. Coal is worked at Khost and near Quetta, iron and lead near Khuzdar. The salt industry is carried on at Pishin.

The local manufactures include leather-work, pottery (at Kachhi), milling, rough blankets, felts, weapons, and agricultural implements.

The chief exports are wool, grain, dates and other fruits, mustard, rape-seed, and the imports especially textiles, animals, hay, tea, and sugar. The chief trade is

with India. Gwadar is the largest port. There is also a through trade with Persia.

### Government

Though forming one large unit, in detail the country is in three spheres of control.

(a) There are the native states of Kalat and Las Bela with an area of 80,410 sq. miles. They consist of a confederation of native tribes under the Khan of Kalat. The chief of the Las Bela territory is known as the Jam. At the court of the khan is an agent of the Governor-General, who acts as arbitrator or in an advisory capacity.

(b) British Baluchistan, consisting of tracts acquired by the treaty of 1879, has an area of approximately 9000 sq. miles.

(c) In addition are Agency Territories estimated at 45,130 sq. miles, consisting of areas leased at different times.

The Government head-quarters are at Quetta. The administration is controlled by the Chief Commissioner and Agent to the Governor-General. Political Agents are in charge of the local administration in the six districts into which the territory is divided. Regular troops are stationed at Quetta, Chaman, Fort Sandeman, and Loralai.

### Religion and Education

The population is either Moslem (Sunni) or Hindu. There are a certain number of government and private schools, the majority being for boys.

## INDIA

India is a collection of many different countries, with different formations, different climates, and different peoples, religions, and languages. It is the central, and by far the most important of the three terminal peninsulas of Asia. The total area of India is 1,802,630 sq. miles, and of this 1,093,000 sq. miles are under direct or indirect British rule or protection.

### Relief

India falls naturally into three large physical divisions:

(a) The *northern mountains* form a magnificent and continuous land frontier north of the tropic. The pivot of the system is where the Hindu Kush and the Karakoram Mountains diverge from the Pamir. Along the north-west, from the Arabian Sea to the Hindu Kush, are parallel ranges rising from the low plain of Hindustan to the plateau-lands of Afghanistan and Baluchistan. These mountains (the Kirthar, Sulaiman, &c.) are difficult of access, and through communication is confined to the two main routes through the famous Khyber and Bolan Passes.<sup>1</sup> Eastward from Kashmir, the Himalayan ranges form an almost unsurmountable barrier, 200 miles broad, between India and the Tibetan plateau.

<sup>1</sup> See Afghanistan and Baluchistan.

For 1600 miles east and west the mountains rise in serried ranks of parallel ranges, snow-capped heights, and rocky peaks. Everest (29,002 feet), Godwin Austen (28,250 feet), and Kinchinjunga (27,815 feet) tower above deep dark valleys. In the mountains are the head-waters of the great rivers of India—the Indus, the Ganges, and the Brahmaputra. In the whole length of this mountainous wall there is practically no weak spot. There are passes across it, but the lowest is over 16,000 feet; and, as the snow-line on the southern face of the range is at about that height, even the lowest pass is thus practically closed by snow from November to May. Even if this were not so, the perilous nature of the rough paths along the sides of the precipitous gorges, the extreme difficulty of crossing the rivers which flow from the immense glaciers in every part of the range, and the breadth of the range, would make it quite impossible for any considerable body of men to cross from Tibet or China into India.

Between the mountain uplands and the plain proper is the Terai, a region of poisonous swamp and jungle.

(b) The *Indo-Gangetic plain* is a continuous lowland, nowhere above 600 feet, except along the low watershed separating the two basins. The vast network of waterways, which covers the plains, draws its perennial supplies of water from the snows and glaciers of the mountain



## Resources

About two-thirds of the total population of India is engaged in agricultural occupations, and more dependent on the fruits of their labour than any similar population in any other part of the world. The considerations of economy, the nature of the climate, and religious prejudices cause the majority of the people to live mainly on a vegetable diet; and in a country where the population is very dense, as it is in most parts of India, the difficulty of providing food always becomes acute. The plants vary with soil and climate, but the most productive parts of the country are those which enjoy the most regular and abundant rainfall. The most valuable products are rice, wheat, millet, cotton, jute, tobacco, tea, opium, flax (for oil-seed), coffee, indigo, and chinchona.

The largest acreage is under *rice*. A wild species of rice is indigenous to India, and it forms the chief food of all the inhabitants of Eastern Asia. It grows on hot low lands, near large rivers which overflow their banks, and is therefore found in Bengal, Madras, and the Bombay coast. There are sometimes three harvests every year, two of them even off the same land. As the rainfall of India is concentrated into the monsoon period, a plant like rice, which requires to be under water for days during its early growth, will flourish best where there are most facilities for irrigation. Such conditions are characteristic of the Ganges plains, and the deltas round the Bay of Bengal. Patna, one of the old rice markets on the Ganges, used to supply much of the export to Europe. Now, however, most of the rice in the United Kingdom, which is obtained from India, is drawn from Sind and Burma, where the population is relatively small enough to allow of a valuable surplus.

**Millet**, of various kinds, is the staple food of the agricultural population outside of Bengal. It is cultivated over the whole of the peninsula, requiring much less moisture than rice; but, though it is grown over a large acreage, it does not enter largely into commerce, being usually consumed where it is grown. **Wheat** is a winter crop in India, and is limited to Sind, the Punjab, and the Upper Ganges basin. The wheat growing area is gradually being extended by irrigation in the northern plains, and the crop is exported from Karachi and Bombay.

Of the fibre plants cotton and jute are most important. **Cotton** occupies an area less than one-third of that under rice; but it approximates to the area under wheat. As it requires a long, warm summer, with abundance of rain or irrigation, it flourishes best on the black soil lands of Bombay, and in the Ganges valley. The former is the more important area, especially that part of it through which the Tapti flows, the soil there being a very fertile decomposition of basaltic rock plentifully supplied with lime. The plant also flourishes on other parts of the tableland where the black soil, which is very tenacious of water, is found. Most of the cotton for export is concentrated at Bombay, which is also the centre of a native cotton-manufacturing industry.

**Jute** stands second only to cotton in value in the total export trade of India, though the actual acreage is very small, and is practically confined to the alluvial sandbanks in the damp warmth of Bengal, where it flourishes

better than in any other part of the world. Calcutta is the chief centre of the trade.

**Tobacco** is grown mainly along the lowlands of the Kavari, Saharmati, and the Irawadi, especially round Trichinopoly and Madura. The bulk of the tobacco is consumed locally, but the export trade is increasing.

**Tea**, which grows wild in Assam, is one of the hardest of sub-tropical plants, being able to resist even severe frosts. It is chiefly found in Assam, and on the south-eastern slopes of the Himalaya, where it can obtain the regular moisture which it needs, without being injured by moisture settling round its root; and there, too, is found the light friable soil, enriched with vegetable mould from the Himalayan forests, which is the ideal soil for the shrub, especially if there is iron also present.

Rice (77)
Wheat (23.7)
Cotton (2.1)

Acreage under Rice, Wheat, and Cotton in India, 1918-9,  
in millions of acres

**Coffee** is exceedingly sensitive to frost, and is, therefore, confined to the south of India and Ceylon.

**Opium** is grown in the Ganges valley, but has decreased in importance as the trade with China has declined.

**Flax** is grown, not for the fibre, but for the seed, which as linseed forms a valuable item in the export trade. The extension of the cultivation of ground nuts in India also contributes to the supply of vegetable oils. The production of indigo has decreased owing to development of the chemical-lye industries. Chinchona and rubber are also grown.

## Pasture

Pasturage is always limited in an over-populated country, and in India the tropical and semi-tropical climate, and the religious beliefs, forbid any considerable consumption of animal food; but there is a large demand for horned cattle for agricultural work, and, consequently, the least valuable land is given up to pasturage. This land is found along the eastern edge of the Thar desert; and the fact that the rainfall over this area is not really sufficient for successful agriculture in such a latitude guarantees the presence in the soil of the saline elements which are most necessary for the health of cattle, and which are washed away by excessive rain. For export purposes, however, sheep, goats, and silk-worms are more valuable than cattle. The sheep and goats are naturally found in the dry north-west. Kashmir has given its name to a famous kind of shawl.

## Forests

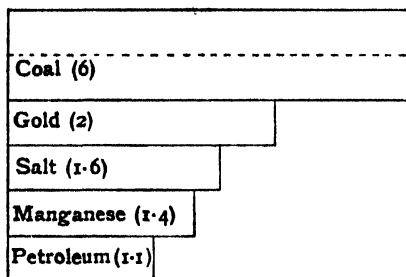
Timber covers much of the hilly and mountainous parts of the country, and the forests are under close

**Government control.** The total area of forest is estimated as 251,468 sq. miles, and of this total 101,639 sq. miles are under the direct control of the State Forest Department. The two most valuable woods are teak and sal.

**Teak** is grown along the Western Ghats, and **sal** more especially along the Himalayan base. In the dry climate of Mysore and Bombay east of the Ghats, a considerable amount of sandal-wood is grown. The mango, banana, and orange are the commonest cultivated trees.

### Mineral

The mineral products of India are less valuable than the agricultural, and have been less developed, but deposits of almost every metal exist. The most valuable production is confined to coal, gold, manganese, petroleum, and salt.



Production of Minerals on basis of value in millions of £ in India, 1918

**Coal**, the most important of all minerals, is found distributed over a considerable area of India, both in small and in large deposits.

Coal Areas (1914).	Approximate Extension.
Godavari Basin ... ..	11,000 sq. miles.
Son ... ..	8,000 "
Sarguja and Gangpur ... ..	4,500 "
Assam ... ..	3,000 "
Narbada Basin ... ..	3,500 "
Damodar ... ..	2,000 "
Rajmahal ... ..	300 "
Unsurveyed ... ..	2,700 "
	35,000 sq. miles.

The preceding is an approximate computation of the coal areas in India, but many of the seams lie buried at great depths, and may prove unworkable.

### CHIEF WORKING COALFIELDS IN INDIA, 1914

Province.	Locality.
Assam . . . . .	Makum.
Baluchistan . . . . .	{ Khost, Sharigh, &c., Sor Range, and Nach.
Bihar and Orissa . . . . .	Jharia, Daltonganj, Giridhi.
Central Provinces . . . . .	{ Rampur, Ballapur, Mohpani, Chhindwara, Worora.
Central India . . . . .	Umaria.
Hyderabad . . . . .	Singareni.

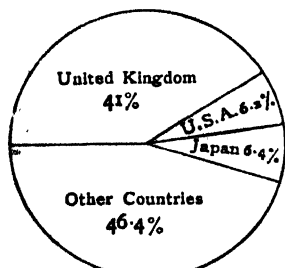
Though there has been a steady increase of production and consumption of coal for several years, the resources remain in a backward state of development. Of the total number of worked fields, only seven are of any considerable importance. The total output of coal in 1918<sup>1</sup> was 19,847,039 tons, and of this 95.6 per cent was produced in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. The best Indian coal is obtained from the small field in the Damodar valley, about 120 miles north-west of Calcutta.

**Iron** is widely scattered over the whole country, and some of it is of excellent quality; but owing to difficulties of transport and fuel the output is limited.

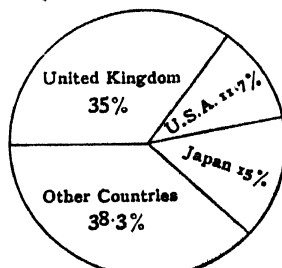
**Gold** is found in Mysore, where the hard old rock of the plateau is traversed by parallel bands of a later formation; these bands contain quartz reefs and veins, some of which are highly auriferous. The power for working the Kolar goldfields is derived mainly from the Cauvery Falls. Small quantities of gold are also procured from the Assam Rivers.

**Salt** is procured in India by mining and by evaporation. But even the joint product is not sufficient for the home demand, and there is an import of salt into the country. The evaporating process is chiefly confined to the coast. The most famous salt mines are in the Salt Range in the north of the Punjab. India, before the war, was the chief source of the world's supply of mica. The mica-bearing areas are in Bengal (in the Gáya, Hazaribagh, and Monghyr districts), Madras (Nellore and the Nilgiris), and in Rajputana (Ajmere and Merwara). The output in 1918 was 51,572 cwt.

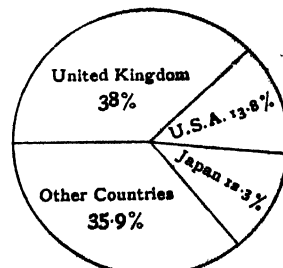
<sup>1</sup> Output in 1919 was 22,628,000 tons.



1913-14



1918-19



1919-20

Varying percentage of the total trade of India with the United Kingdom, United States, Japan, &c., before and after the war

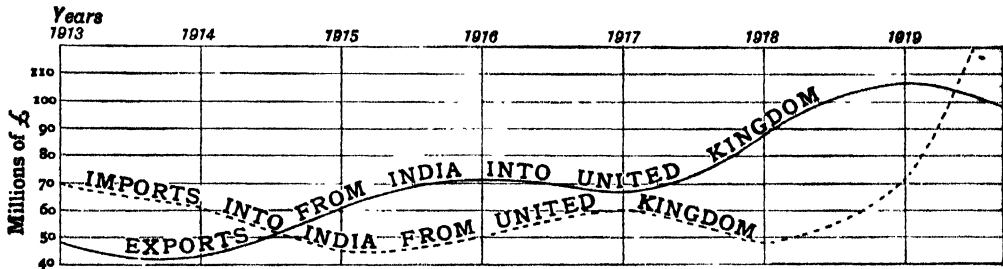
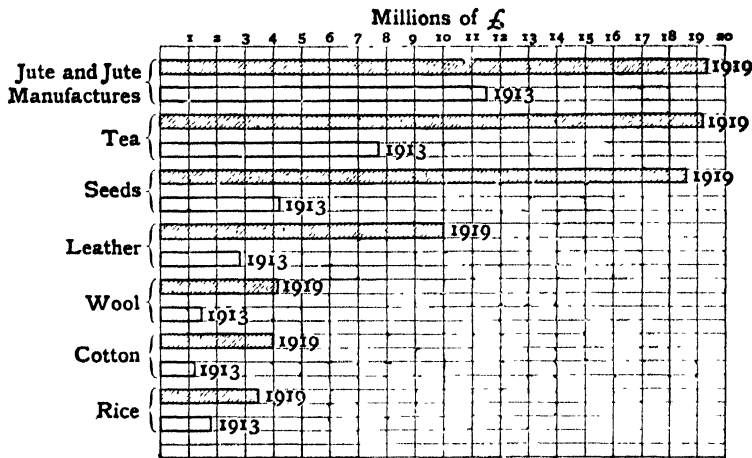
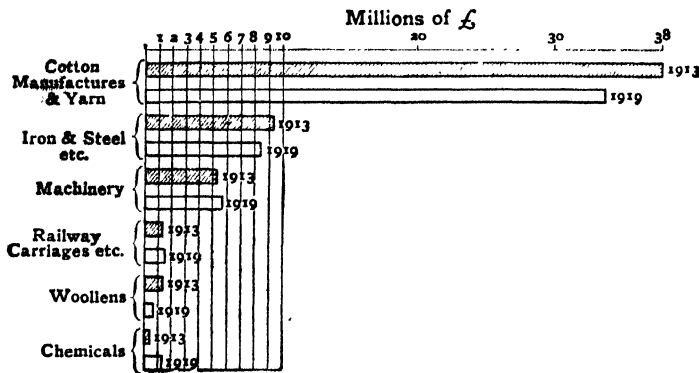


Diagram showing fluctuations in trade between India and the United Kingdom



Chief Exports to United Kingdom from India in 1913 and 1919. Note: wheat omitted



Chief Imports from United Kingdom in 1913 and 1919

## Commerce

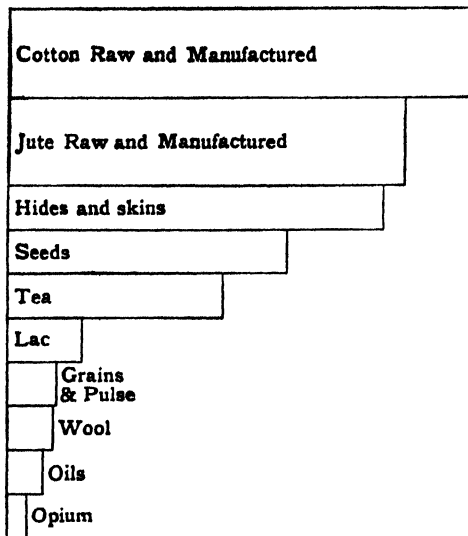
India remains the greatest outlet for British products, being the most important market for British manufactured goods. But since the war it has become a competitive market. In 1913 the United Kingdom exported to India over seventy million pounds worth of goods, and of this

total 96 per cent consisted of manufactured articles. During the War the United States and Japan replaced the Central Powers, and their goods are now in competition with those of the United Kingdom.

In 1913 the American export trade to India amounted to about £3,000,000, and of this total 50 per cent consisted of mineral oils. In 1918-9 the shipments had

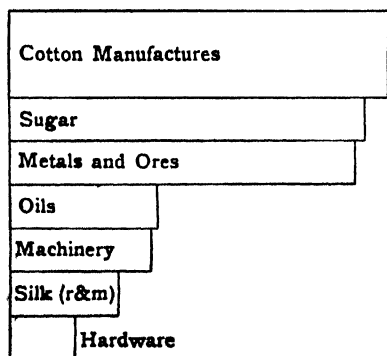


increased to over £11,000,000, and are still increasing. The trade is largely in machinery, &c. Before the war only about 2½ per cent of the total import trade, and 7½ per cent of the total export trade of India was



Relative Proportion on Basis of Value of Chief Exports from India, 1919-20

with Japan. During the war the trade increased enormously, but it is doubtful whether the trade will continue. Japanese competition was felt most keenly in cotton manufactures. In 1918-9 about 71.6 per cent of the



Relative Proportion on Basis of Value of Seven Chief Imports, 1919-20

total import of cotton yarn was obtained from Japan, but the United Kingdom supplies by far the greater percentage of piece-goods. The chief exports of India in point of value are: cotton, jute, hides and skins, rice, seeds (oil seeds), tea, other grains (wheat, &c.). The main im-

ports are: cotton manufactures, sugar, metals, ores and machinery, oils, silks, and hardware.

The foreign trade of India passed through Calcutta, Bombay, Rangoon, Madras, and Karachi. Since the War Karachi has taken the place of Madras.

**Calcutta** has about 1,220,000 inhabitants. It is essentially a mercantile city, handling the greatest volume of trade of any port in India, but it also has important jute and paper industries.

**Bombay** is the second largest town (979,445) and second port of India. It is the centre of the cotton industry.

**Madras** (518,660) was one of the earliest settlements. It is situated on a surf-bound coast with poor harbour facilities, but forms the outlet for the east of the peninsula.

**Karachi** (151,903) is increasing in importance as the hinterland is being developed under irrigation. It is the chief wheat port.

**Delhi** (232,800) is the political capital of India. It has an excellent position in relation to the two great lowlands of the Indus and the Ganges, with good railway communication to all parts of India.

## Government

The administration of the Indian Empire is under the control of a Secretary of State for India, assisted by a Council of from eight to twelve members, appointed for five years by the Secretary of State. At least one-half of the members must have served or resided for not less than ten years in India. The Council is concerned solely with business transacted in the United Kingdom which touches the government of India. According to the Government of India Act of 1919 a High Commissioner for India may be appointed to assist the Secretary of State.

In India the supreme executive power is invested in the Governor-General in Council. The Governor-General (or Viceroy) is appointed by the King as a rule for a period of five years. The Executive Council consists of a few members (about eight), but of these at least three members must have resided a minimum of ten years in India, and one must be a barrister of not less than ten years' standing. The Council controls the eleven government departments of finance, agriculture, &c.

Legislative power is vested in the Governor-General, a Council of State, and a Legislative Assembly.

The Council of State consists of about sixty members elected for five years.

The Legislative Assembly consists of 144 members, of which 103 are elected and 26 are official members. Members are elected for three years, but the assembly may be dissolved or the time may be extended by the Governor-General. When differences of opinion occur between the two chambers they may confer together. The Legislative has power, within certain limits, to make laws for all persons within British India, and British subjects in native States, or Indian subjects of the king elsewhere.

India is divided into fifteen administrative areas, and distinctions are made between the functions of the Central and Provincial Governments. The *Provincial Govern-*

*nient* is a dualized form of government. The Governor-General in Council controls the Provincial Government in certain recognized "reserved subjects", but delegates to the Provincial Government certain "transferred subjects". The Central Government may only interfere with "transferred subjects" when general interests are at stake. Provinces are divided into divisions under Commissioners, and subdivided into districts under an executive officer.

**Indian States** are governed by native princes, ministers, or councils. These are supreme within their own territories, but the Government of India exerts a varying degree of control in many respects. A Council of Princes was instituted in 1921, as a permanent consultative body to discuss affairs of common concern.

Municipalities are responsible for local affairs and organization. They may make by-laws, improvements, &c., with the sanction of the Provincial Government. Various local Boards and Committees control affairs in rural districts.

## Education

Schools, which conform to the standard of the Department of Public Instruction, or are examined or inspected by the Department, are divided broadly into (1) primary, (2) secondary, and (3) colleges. Primary schools are restricted to elementary knowledge in the vernacular. Secondary schools attain to matriculation standard. The colleges are affiliated to the six universities in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, the Punjab, Allahabad, and Patna. Universities have also been established at Dacca, Lucknow, and Rangoon. There is a university for Mysore, and a Hindu university at Benares.

## Population

India has no common race, no common language, and no common religion. Only when viewed from outside does it form a single and distinct unit of the larger whole of Asia. Internally it remains a conglomeration of many races, multitudinous languages, and numerous religions, diverse and antagonistic. The country has been welded into a semblance of unity at the present day by a small minority of a foreign race, a different language, and another religion, but with a faculty for government unknown among the native races.

Racially, many successive waves of peoples have flooded India. The *Pre-Dravidian* inhabitants, who resemble the Australian aborigines, have been driven to the most inaccessible regions of Central India, and survive in scattered groups among the forested hills.

The *Dravidians* entered India from the west, and passed on to the peninsula. Their descendants are found chiefly to the south of the Mahanadi. The best-known tribes are the Tamils and Telugus.

The Dravidians were succeeded by a fair-skinned, long-headed race, who entered India by way of the north-west frontier from the plateau lands of Iran. These were of a mixed *Armenoid* stock, and occupied the lowlands of the Indus and Upper Ganges. They form the aristocratic fighting clans of India, of which the most

famous divisions are the Rajputs of Rajputana and Sind, and the Jats. The Jats are also a warrior race, living chiefly in the middle Indus region, and profess a form of Hinduism. The Bengali constitute the mass of the dense population in the plain of the lower Ganges. In direct contrast to the northern races the Bengali is not warlike, and usually appears to be an admixture of Dravidian and Mongol stock. There has always been a gradual infiltration of the *Mongol* race from the Tibetan plateau into India. The Mongol element is most marked in the border states of Nepal, Bhutan, and Assam, and along the foot-hills of the Himalaya.

According to the census of March, 1921, the total population of India was over 319 millions, showing an increase of four millions over the census return of 1911. About three-quarters of the total population live in British India. As agriculture and pasture are the predominant occupation—accounting for 72 per cent of the total—the distribution of population is intimately connected with the rainfall and configuration. It is naturally densest in regions with maximum possibilities of cultivation, i.e. on the well-watered levels of the Ganges, the Indus, and the eastern flank of the peninsula. In Bengal there are 578 people to the square mile, and in the United Provinces 440. The population tends to decrease in density westwards, falling to 75 per square mile in Sind, where the rainfall is negligible, and density of population is commensurate with possibilities of irrigation.

Less than 10 per cent of the population of India is urban, the mass of the people being scattered in small groups and villages of under 5000 people. India has only one city—Calcutta—which has over a million inhabitants; and only 30 cities of over 100,000, as compared with 44 in the United Kingdom, and 50 in the United States. Fluctuations in population also correspond closely with periods of agricultural prosperity or depression, the greatest increase being registered after a succession of good harvests, and the lowest increase being associated with periods of famine and disease. The growth of population, during the last fifty years, is only at about half the rate among the Teutonic races of Europe, but exceeds that of the Latin nations. The actual birth rate is higher than in Europe, but the mortality, especially among infants, is very high.

There is comparatively little movement of population. In 1911 it was calculated that only 8.7 per cent of the total population (including Europeans, &c.) were born outside of the districts in which they were enumerated, and even of this tiny percentage as many as 62 per cent of the natives were born in adjacent districts. Now, however, industrial areas are beginning appreciably to attract population. More than one-third of the total population is concentrated in the plains east of Delhi.

## Religion

By nature the inhabitants of India are highly religious, and religion enters into the daily life of the people sufficiently to affect vitally social relations. There are many religions, but only three leading forms, which claim about 95 per cent of the total population.

# Commercial and Statistical Survey

About two-thirds of the people profess **Hinduism**, associated with which is the "caste system" of India. There are four chief castes, but these are subdivided into an innumerable number of other castes, based largely on differences of occupation and trades. The highest caste is that of the Brahmin or priest, and birth is the qualification for admittance to any caste, and the most rigid rules are laid down against intercourse and inter-marriage.

**Mohammedanism** is strongest in the northern provinces,

and claims about one-fifth of the population. It was introduced into India by Arab invaders, and centres round Delhi, which was the capital of the Moslem Empire of the thirteenth century.

**Buddhism** is not strong in India Proper, though it was founded by Gautama, a Hindu and a warrior prince. Its followers are now chiefly found in Burma and Ceylon.

Apart from these three main groups, the Parsis are a fairly numerous community, concentrated in Bombay, and Christianity is rapidly increasing.

## AREA AND POPULATION OF INDIAN STATES NOT UNDER DIRECT BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

Indian States.	Area in square miles.	Population in 1911.	Density per square mile
Assam State ... ..	8400	346,000	41
Baluchistan States ... ..	80,400	420,000	5
Baroda State ... ..	8000	2,032,000	248
Bengal States ... ..	5300	822,000	153
Bihar and Orissa States ... ..	28,600	3,940,000	138
Bombay States ... ..	63,800	7,400,000	116
Central India Agency ... ..	77,400	9,357,000	121
Central Province and States ... ..	31,200	2,000,000	68
Hyderabad State ... ..	82,600	13,380,000	162
Kashmir State ... ..	84,400	3,000,000	37
Madras States ... ..	10,500	4,800,000	456
Mysore State ... ..	29,400	5,800,000	197
North-West Frontier Province ... ..	25,400	1,622,000	64
Punjab States ... ..	36,500	4,213,000	115
Rajputana Agency ... ..	129,000	10,500,000	82
Sikkim State ... ..	2800	88,000	31
United Provinces ... ..	5000	832,000	164
Nepal (Independent) ... ..	54,000	5,600,000	—
Bhutan ... ..	20,000	250,000	—

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROVINCES OF BRITISH INDIA.

Province.	Area in square miles.	Population in 1911.	Density per square mile.
Madras ... ..	142,000	41,500,000	291
Bombay ... ..	123,000	19,500,000	160
Bengal ... ..	78,700	45,500,000	578
United Provinces of Agra and Oudh ... ..	107,000	47,000,000	440
The Punjab ... ..	99,000	19,000,000	200
Burma ... ..	231,000	12,000,000	52
Bihar and Orissa ... ..	83,000	34,500,000	415
Central Provinces and Berar ... ..	100,000	14,000,000	139
Assam ... ..	53,000	6,700,000	127
North-West Frontier Province ... ..	13,400	2,250,000	164
Ajmer-Merwara ... ..	2700	500,000	185
Coorg ... ..	1580	175,000	111
Baluchistan ... ..	54,000	400,000	8
Delhi ... ..	557	390,000	—
Adaman and Nicobar Islands ... ..	3140	26,000	8

## ACREAGE AND PRODUCTION OF TEA IN INDIA, 1913 AND 1918.

Province.	Acreage, 1913	Acreage, 1918.	Production, 1913, in pounds.	Production, 1918, in pounds.
Assam ... ..	367,500	405,900	199,722,000	253,270,000
Bengal ... ..	156,000	169,100	80,109,000	89,984,000
Southern India ... ..	63,700	83,000	22,245,000	33,148,000
Northern India ... ..	17,300	15,500	4,709,000	3,623,000
Bihār and Orissa ... ..	2200	2200	312,000	324,000
Burma ... ..	3000	2800	*	*
	609,700	678,500	307,097,000	380,349,000

\* Burmese production of tea is generally converted into a condiment.

## LESSER ISLANDS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

Islands	Population	Government.	Chief Products.
Laccadive Islands (200 isles : 9 inhabited) }	10,600	{ Attached to Madras Presidency	{ Coconut palms, exported principally in the form of coir.
Maldives (13 coral islands) }	70,000	{ Tributary to Ceylon	{ Coconut palms, millet, fruits.
Andamans (6 large islands, 200 islets)	16,300	{ Under a	{ Timber, coconuts, tea, rubber.
Nicobar Islands (19 islands, 12 inhabited) }	(15,500 are convicts) 8,800	{ Chief Commissioner (Government of India)	{ Coconut palms, product exported mainly in the form of copra.

*Printed and bound in Great Britain*

